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Hortense, queen of Holland, 1783-1837

MEMOIRS

OF

HORTENSE BEAUHARNAIS,

DUCHESS OF ST. LEU, EX-QUEEN OF HOLLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

PHILADELPHIA:
KEY AND BIDDLE, 23 MINOR STREET.
1833.

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It was elegantly remarked by the Prince de Ligne, that "Mademoiselle Beauharnais wields a sceptre which never breaks in her hands. She remains a queen by the grace of her own talents, after having ceased to be one 'by the grace of God;'" but if the biography of Hortense Beauharnais had possessed no claims of more immediate value, the deep interest attached to all who were connected with Napoleon, would, of itself, be a sufficient apology for the appearance of the present memoirs. It is unnecessary for us to write a panegyric on the character of the Duchess of St. Leu; her encomium will be best exhibited in the history of her life; she was exposed to the world's gaze by the surpassing brilliancy of her father-in-law's actions, but the reflected glare only served to display her amiable virtues. These, and the fame she has acquired, are intrinsically her own; she owes nothing to Napoleon, beyond that fortune which converted the

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delight of private life into the ornament of a throne.

From internal evidence we are led to conclude that the author of the present work is the Count de la Garde, whose visit to the Dutchess of St. Leu is described in the nineteenth chapter. Before that introduction, he had composed a number of metrical ballads, of the kind styled in French, *Romances*, several of which had previously attracted the attention of Hortense, and were set to music by herself. One or two highly flattering letters, addressed by her to the count, are inserted either in the body of the work or in the notes; we may safely pronounce him at least a correspondent of the dutchess, enjoying in some degree her confidence, and it may be that the present work possesses still higher claims to the reader's interest and to complete authenticity, from the subject of it having supplied part of the materials herself.

The spirit of M. de la Garde's poetry is transferred to his memoirs of an accomplished and unfortunate queen. It exhibits itself in romantic sentiments and flights of fancy, which, however appropriate in their native tongue, may appear unduly elevated in their English dress. The translator must therefore disclaim all accountability for occasional loftiness of style,

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which it was impossible to soften without destroying the character of the work.

The expensive European edition contains the engravings, ballads, and music (romances), composed by Hortense, with a likeness of her, as seated at the harp; we regret that for obvious reasons we are compelled to omit these evidences of her talents. A number of illustrative notes have been added to this edition in the course of translation, consisting chiefly of such extracts from the various cotemporary memoirs as appeared necessary for explanation, or interesting as additional details. We may safely anticipate that the present work will be considered a valuable addition to the stock of authentic French biography with which the American public are already supplied.

Philadelphia, April, 1833.

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PREFACE.

The French revolution is the most wonderful, and even now, the most influential event of modern days. Begun by popular masses, it was extended and at length terminated by one who centered in himself all its genius and giant-like energy. This was Napoleon, whose renown rises far above all contemporary glory, and whose name will be, hereafter, the proudest in all history.

The interest felt by every one in a great man, extends itself to all his intimate connections, and more especially to his family. That of Napoleon has been a fertile subject for those private memoirs, which will one day figure in history as its important materials. Some of them have added personal reputation to the celebrity of

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their house ; while others, devoted by their sex or character to more tranquil pursuits, have become famous for mental endowments and for a high degree of sensibility and greatness of soul. The former have commanded unbounded admiration, but the memory of the latter has its foundation in universal affection. Such were Josephine and the Queen of Holland. The empress has already been the theme of many writers: the memoirs of her daughter, which we now submit to the public, will show that she was equally worthy of love and esteem.

Whence arises the secret satisfaction we all derive from the narrative of sudden elevation and unforeseen reverses ? Can it be selfishness, which, by unperceived links in the human mind, gratifies us by exhibiting the chance of humiliation as a counterpoise for the accidental splendour of a crown ? Let us rather believe that every feeling and dispassionate man delights in the view of happiness, commiserates the unfortunate, and, alike a stranger to envy and unfeeling joy, unites the pleasures of the mind and of the heart to the advantages of wordly prosperity.

Biographies of females are always attractive. We hope to trace the workings of their hearts, which so many fancy they can read, and which so few rightly appreciate. To treat woman as all goodness, is not to know her well ; to believe

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her all evil, is not to know her at all. Even females are not always fortunate in self judgment; for it is a part of human nature, ever to remain in ignorance of self in spite of the most constant study.

But if the memoirs of every woman excite eager attention, how much more interest should we feel in the history of one, who, seated upon a throne not hers by birthright, proved herself worthy of elevation by that winning affability which renders power pardonable without encouraging disrespect. When, however, the same princess, after being raised to splendour, is again precipitated into obscurity, from a mere object of popular wonder, she becomes a fit theme for the meditations of the philosopher; he contemplates her struggling with adversity, and can estimate her dignity on the throne, from her constancy in misfortune.

When a princess is gifted with all those shining qualities, which, in adorning merit, embellish the fairest gifts of nature, a descent from sovereignty only narrows her powers of usefulness. Removed from the intoxicating incense of courts, she has still the balm of memory, the pleasures of reflection and the delight of conferring happiness—a delight not less lively because its sphere is more confined. A woman like Hortense reigns without royalty; she wears her

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splendour as the ruby its purple. The empire that remains may well compensate a diadem's loss, for it is the power a woman most covets—*better known, better loved.*

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MEMOIRS

OF

HORTENSE BEAUHARNAIS.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and relatives of Hortense—Her father the Vicomte de Beauharnois—Her mother, Josephine de la Pagerie—The Marquis de Beauharnais, her uncle—Dangerous situation of Hortense at Martinique.

Hortense Fanny de Beauharnais was born at Paris on the 10th of April, 1783, at a period when the French nobility was still resplendent with that prosperity which was the reward of service done to the state, in arms or magistracy. Paris had not yet learned to gaze enviously upon this elevated class, then as pre-eminent by the elegance of its manners, as by the enjoyment of privileges to which it attached little importance. Every young girl of family could

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then, not perhaps aspire openly to the throne, but at least flatter herself with the belief of rising to it without difficulty. Madame de Maintenon had shown that royal blood was not essential to the easy exercise of royal power.

The history of childhood is rather the story of the family than of the infant. Hortense gave promise of wit, grace, and amiability, but the fond anticipations of maternal partiality were not realised until after a series of distressing calamities, of which some account may not be inappropriate.

Her father, the Vicomte de Beauharnais, was a younger son of a noble and wealthy family of Martinique. He entered the army at an early age, and obtained distinction in several affairs as a major in the forces under Rochambeau, then fighting for the cause of American freedom. Upon his return to France, without disgracing the creed of liberty by any unworthy action, he adhered to the principles he had defended, which perhaps had been prematurely developed by his American associations. He espoused with enthusiasm the doctrines of the revolution, and became a zealous advocate of the reform of abuses, and of a well regulated liberty.

Rather a philosopher than a courtier, Beauharnais hailed with joy the dawn of that liberty

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in France, which he had seen resplendent in America. In 1789, he was deputed to the states general by the noblesse of Blois, and was one of the first of his order who voted with the third estate. In the memorable nocturnal sitting of the 4th of August, he moved and carried the abolition of privileges, equal penalties for all classes of citizens, and universal eligibility to office. After having been secretary of the constituent assembly, he was appointed on the different military committees, from which he made several remarkable reports, on the organisation of the National Guard, the maintenance of discipline in the army, and the means of protecting the country from military usurpation. One of his most constant and active opponents was his brother, the Marquis de Beauharnais, who was also a member of the assembly, but belonged to the *Coté droit*.

It is related by Mercier, in his Picture of Paris, that the Vicomte took a prominent part in the preparations for the festival of the federation, celebrated in the Champ de Mars, on the 14th of July, 1790. He figured in the procession, harnessed to the same car with the Abbe Sieyes.

Sincerely devoted to the true interests of his country, he warned the nobles that the time had come, when they must declare themselves; that

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as yet nothing was done for the people, who had many just causes of complaint, and that prudence alone could now avert bloodshed and save Louis XVI.

Beauharnais was president of the national assembly at the time of the king's flight, on the 21st of June, 1791. He displayed the true firmness of antiquity in announcing to the deputies this disastrous intelligence. "Gentlemen," said he, on taking the chair, "the king set out last night: let us proceed to the order of the day." His dignity and presence of mind extorted admiration even from his enemies, and procured his re-election to to the presidency on the ensuing 31st of July. At the close of the session, he joined the army of the north, with the rank of adjutant general. His behaviour at the rout of Mons, April 29th, 1792, was highly commended by Biron, then general in chief; and in the beginning of August, the command of the camp at Soissons was entrusted to him by General Custine. After the memorable 10th of August, the army commissioners of the legislative assembly distinguished him as one of the generals who still continued in the service—faithful to their honour and their country. Two months afterwards he addressed a proclamation to the army of the Rhine, and in December his

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conduct was again made the theme of praise by Custine, and Sache the minister of war.

On the 29th of May, 1793, he was proclaimed commander in chief of the army of the Rhine, and shortly afterwards he declined the ministry of war. The nobles were at this period wholly excluded from military employment, and Beauharnais, with a feeling of honourable pride, placed his resignation in the hands of the deputies of the convention. This they at first refused, but it was finally accepted on the 21st of August, with the usual order to retire to the distance of twenty leagues from the capital. Leaving General Landremont in command of the army, he took up his residence at the estate of Beauharnais, near La Ferte Imbaut, (Loir et Cher,) which had been erected into a marquisate for his father. He had previously been the subject of several denunciations, which were answered in his "Observations on the Proscription of the Nobles," and had now scarcely reached his new abode before fresh accusations assailed him, to which he replied with the dignity of conscious innocence. All was in vain; he was arrested and imprisoned in Paris.

The court, as if impelled by an irresistible fatality, had afforded to republican insurrection the pretext of warlike invasion and foreign alliance. The Marquis de Beauharnais, brother

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of the vicomte, was one of those imprudent adherents of monarchy, who, by their blind devotion to their party, mainly contributed to the overflow of a torrent which no barrier could withstand. Wherever a government is exposed to sudden change, and the interests of relationship are mingled with political passions, it commonly happens that members of the same family espouse opposite parties. Thus in Scotland, during the last century, nothing was more frequent than to see one nobleman a zealous Jacobite, while his son or brother remained a faithful adherent of the house of Brunswick. In every event of the contest, the family possessions were secured; for natural feeling afforded an excellent pretext for the protection or pardon of the defeated. But the political opposition of the two Beauharnais was the result of no selfish calculation. Each was firmly convinced of the rectitude of his principles, and each underwent the severest punishment of consistency—the ingratitude of his party. The vicomte, after having shone with distinction in the constituent assembly, and commanded with honour the armies of the republic, perished on the scaffold on the 23d of July, in the thirty-fourth year of his age; bequeathing to his children a rich heritage of glory, worthy of the proud motto of their house —"SERVE NO FURTHER." In 1815 it was

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only by the heroic devotion of Madame Lavallette, that her husband, the son-in-law of the marquis, was rescued from a similar fate.

The Vicomte de Beauharnais married in Martinique Josephine Rose Tascher de la Pagerie; a creole lady of distinguished birth. Previous to her marriage, her attention was one day attracted by a group of slaves, collected around an old negro sybil, who was telling their fortunes. Josephine stopped; and the hag no sooner perceived her new auditor, than, uttering a loud shriek, she seized her hand in the utmost agitation. "You must certainly discover something very striking in my appearance," said Josephine: "Well—shall my fortune be good or evil?" "Both!" "I must confess, my good woman, that your predictions are quite vague enough to run no risk of contradiction." The old woman raised her eyes with a singular expression. "Come, come," pursued Josephine, whose curiosity now began to be excited, "let me know what is to be read in the story of the future." "In the future—ah! you will not believe me if I tell." "Oh, yes! I promise you full credence, my good mother; tell me what I have to hope or fear." "If you insist on it—listen! You will soon marry—your union will be unhappy—you will be left a widow. Then you will become queen of France; you will

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have mighty armies at your feet; but you will die in a revolution." On finishing this extraordinary prediction the old woman retreated with as much activity as her age permitted.

Josephine prohibited her slaves from rallying the sybil on her "ridiculous prophecy." She made use of the apparent absurdity of the promise to prove to the young negresses her slender belief in its fulfilment, and it was treated merely as a subject for family merriment. In fact, there was little reason to imagine that a young West Indian girl could by any revolution be seated on the first throne in the world. Life and death in her native island, seemed the unchangeable destiny of Mademoiselle Tascher. She became the wife of the Vicomte de Beauharnais, and in 1780, gave birth to a son, afterwards Prince Eugene, viceroy of Italy. He was three years older than his sister Hortense.

The cause of American emancipation was too popular in France, not to ensure an enthusiastic reception to the returning officers who had aided it with their courage. To this recommendation, Beauharnais added a prepossessing exterior, agreeable accomplishments, and polished manners. The society of one so eminently qualified to shine was every where courted; and with the natural facility of youth, he gave himself up unreservedly to the seduc-

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tions of the great world. Josephine, thus deserted by the man of her choice, resolved to seek consolation in the place of her birth, and commiseration in the sympathy of her family. She sailed for Martinique in 1787.

Eugene remained with his father: his sister, then only three years old, accompanied her mother across the seas. The vessel in which Madame de Beauharnais had embarked, encountered a violent storm, and Hortense thus commenced a severe apprenticeship to the dangers and misfortunes which afterwards so nearly balanced the glory of her brilliant career. In the convulsion of the elements, she might then have seen a fit emblem of that tempest of human passion, of which her future destiny had marked her for the sport.

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CHAPTER II.

Danger of Hortense and her mother—Hortense returns to France—Generous conduct of Josephine—her imprisonment—Distress of Hortense during her mother's captivity—Josephine set at liberty.

It is beneath the burning sky of the Antilles that the influence of the vertical sun is most strikingly felt, rendering the imagination more ardent, and communicating to the frame the captivating languor so characteristic of the creoles. Hortense experienced its full effects. Her infancy resembled that of the interesting Virginia, so well described by St. Pierre in the episode to the Etudes de la Nature—a work which, for perfection of detail and splendour of colouring, seems to defy imitation. Hortense, compassionate and tender hearted as Virginia herself, was deeply shocked by the miseries of slavery, which, in her childish charity, she strove to alleviate. Like her also, the constant object of maternal solicitude, she imbibed, from the cares, the endearments, and the example of Josephine, the witching grace and captivating sen-

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sibility, which afterwards won every heart and riveted unwavering affection. Thus she, who was one day to rule over subjects, was first the mistress of slaves; but Hortense was ever humane and compassionate, though accustomed from her infancy to dominion. It is only when the hand of woman tempers the rigour of power, when her voice softens the evils of misgovernment, that the unfortunate forget the burthen of their chains, and, contented with the illusion of liberty, sigh no longer for its lost reality.

The effects of the French revolution in the colonies were proportionated to the violent passions of the inhabitants of sultry regions, and the deep hatred excited in the minds of the slaves by the tyranny of their masters. The tremendous explosion of St. Domingo reverberated through the Antilles. The existence of Hortense and her mother was frequently menaced by conflagration and the sword; for the blacks persecuted an entire race, and not individuals. Humanity, mildness, and benevolence were already associated with the name of Josephine, inspiring every where affection and respect. The simple annunciation, "I am Madame de Beauharnais—this is my daughter," was sufficient to disarm the violence of the assassins, and she was fortunately enabled to reach a sea-port and embark for France. Evils of still greater

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magnitude awaited her return, and made a deep impression on the mind of Hortense. She soon learned that there is but a single step from power to servitude, from happiness to misfortune. This first lesson of adversity was not given in vain; and, notwithstanding its severity, it was neither the last nor the least painful she was destined to endure.

The ardent attachment of the vicomte to the principles of the revolution had never cooled for an instant, but a new and more determined faction had overthrown all its rivals, and was now in full possession of power. Beauharnais was imprisoned; for the advocates of moderation and the partisans of ancient privileges were equally obnoxious to gloomy fanaticism. His wife, losing all remembrance of former wrongs, was only sensible of his misfortunes. To love and believe, to suffer and forgive—such is female life. She used every exertion to relieve his situation. Inconstancy had wounded her feelings, but she had never ceased to love her husband; and her truth was displayed, when, without advantage to him, it could only involve her in his fate. Beauharnais was much moved by this generous conduct; and in several affecting letters, written when no hope remained of escaping the scaffold, he warmly commended his children to her care.

Josephine, becoming in her turn an object of

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suspicion, was also confined. Up to this time she had scarcely bestowed a thought upon the fortune-teller of Martinique; but now, by a common inconsistency of human nature, the prediction recurred to her remembrance amid the gloom of a prison. Her mind became accustomed to dwell upon its promises, and she ended by a firm belief in its easy accomplishment.

One morning the jailer entered the cell which she occupied, in common with the Dutchess of Aiguillon, (afterwards Madame Louis de Girardin,) and two other ladies, and announced abruptly, that he came to remove her bed, which was wanted for another prisoner. "Of course," said Madame D'Aiguillon with vivacity, "Madame de Beauharnais is to be provided with a better?" The keeper answered savagely—"There will be little need of that, as she is to go at once to the Conciergerie, and thence to the guillotine." This cruel warning drew loud shrieks from her companions in misfortune, but Josephine attempted the task of consolation. At length she begged them earnestly to calm all their fears, as she was assured, not only of present safety, but of living and reigning the queen of France. "It is a pity that you don't appoint your attendants," cried Madame D'Aiguillon angrily. "Ah! that is very true—I had forgotten. Well, my dear, you shall be one of my

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ladies of honour: come—you have my promise." At these words her companions burst into tears; for they could account for the ill-timed pleasantry only by supposing that she had lost her senses.

Madame D'Aiguillon was much overcome. Josephine led her towards a window, which she threw open to give her air. A woman of ordinary appearance was noticed below, who seemed to be making some extraordinary signals. She shook her dress (*robe*) violently, a gesture which at first was inexplicable. At length Josephine cried out "Robe;" the woman nodded, and immediately seizing a pebble (*pierre*), recommenced her gestures. Josephine again cried "Pierre," and the woman, apparently much gratified, again expressed assent. Then placing her gown and the pebble together, she represented the motion of cutting a throat, dancing and clapping her hands at the same time with great glee. It would be impossible to describe the joy with which the captives ventured to hope that the death of *Robespierre* was thus announced to them.

While they were still divided between hope and fear, a disturbance in the gallery attracted their attention, and they presently distinguished the rough voice of their turnkey, who was kicking his dog and crying out, "Get along, you damned Robespierre!" This energetic expression as-

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sured our ladies that there was little to apprehend, and that France was saved. In fact, a short time afterwards, their companions in misfortune burst into the cell to communicate the tidings of the great events of the 9th Thermidor. "Well," said Josephine, as her bed was returned, "you see I am not destined to be guillotined. I shall certainly be queen of France."

We may pardon the youthful Hortense for anticipating the future completion of a prophecy, which she thus saw partially accomplished, in the preservation of her mother when destruction had appeared inevitable. The superior intelligence of Josephine could not have placed its firm reliance on such a fallacy; though reason and imagination have but slender connection in the mind of a creole. Perhaps she may have entertained hopes of its fulfilment, at the very time that she treated the prediction with the greatest ridicule. It is in this way that we may explain an intimacy (which was, however, much exaggerated) with a fortune teller, who at least has evinced a constant and grateful remembrance of the favours received.

But what was the impression made upon the mind of Hortense by the promise of so brilliant a future? More than once she made it the foundation of those pleasing dreams, which are courted with equal eagerness by childhood, the

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flower of life, and age itself. Happier doubtless would she have been, had destiny reserved for her a fortune less brilliant or less unequal; and if she had felt in the morning of her years all the truth of the wise motto she afterwards adopted—"Little known, little troubled," (*peu connue, peu troublée.*)*

* "On reaching home, I found your new *romance*. I think it very pretty; and although accustomed to agreeable things from you, I am not the less struck with your facility in composing good verses. Whoever told you my motto, has changed it a little. '*Less* known, *less* troubled,' is the one I chose long ago, because it is so well suited to a woman. In prosperous days, my friends used to add, 'More known, more loved;' they knew my only ambition, and wished to make me think that I really possessed what I most desired. Perhaps they think no more about it now, so that my first motto is, after all, the only one that befits me.

"So you have been exhibiting my letters! Were we better acquainted, we should certainly fall out, but you ought to be excused for this fault, as you had mistaken my motto. I had seriously resolved not to write you another line: I neither choose to be praised for what I write, nor to be read by those to whom I have never written. My mind changed in the course of the excursion, for they told me that all the world had not dealt kindly by you, and I do not choose to resemble all the world: on the contrary, the ill will of others only increases my interest in your behalf. I shall begin a collection of mottoes for new *romances*, without the least fear of imposing on your good nature: I see you have a

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After her liberation, Josephine became extremely intimate with Madame Tallien,† at whose house she met Barras. To the patronage of the latter, who became shortly afterwards the head of the directory, she was indebted for the restoration of a part of her fortune.

During the imprisonment of Hortense's parents, one of Josephine's friends, the Princess of Hohenzollern, was struck with compassion for the destitute condition of the two young Beauharnais. As her residence in Paris was rendered

great deal, and I am pleased to tell you how much you have obliged me."—*Letter from Hortense.*

† Mademoiselle Tabarus, the daughter of a Spanish banker, and one of the most beautiful women of her day, married Tallien to save her father's life from the condemnation of a revolutionary tribunal. On the 8th Fructidor, several deputies included in the proscription list of Robespierre, agreed to attack him in the convention. Tallien, at whose house they had assembled, seeing them falter in their resolution, addressed them thus: "Cowards! since you hesitate to deliver France from a monster, I am determined you shall never live to witness the destruction of your country. I go this instant to denounce your treason." The deputies were electrified; resolution was restored, and France was saved. The next day, Robespierre, condemned as soon as accused, perished by the guillotine. Madame Tallien is now married to the Prince of Chimay.

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dangerous by proscription, she proposed to carry them with her into Germany. This design was found impracticable: the princess set out alone, and the unfortunate children remained in Paris, with no other protection than that of an old nurse. The cares of education could be little attended to, when even the means of existence were of difficult attainment. The labours of the nurse were soon found insufficient for the maintenance of three persons; but Hortense, though still very young, evinced that energy of character, which, in after life, was so useful in enabling her to support adversity. Both she and her brother determined to labour for their common livelihood; Eugene hired himself to a joiner, and Hortense went to a mantuamaker's. Her patience under every privation, showed how deeply rooted were those principles of perseverance and resignation, which had been so seduously and successfully inculcated by her excellent mother.

The liberation of Josephine was the means of restoring her daughter to comfort and to her studies. She was placed at a boarding school at St. Germain; which, though but recently opened, had already acquired a well deserved reputation. The sense, talent, and purity of principle of Madame Campan, the head of the

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establishment, were sufficient to ensure its complete success.*

* After the battle of Austerlitz, Madame Campan was appointed by Napoleon to superintend the school at Ecouen, where she remained until its suppression at the restoration of the Bourbons. She then retired to Nantes, where she died on the 16th of March, 1822. In her last moments, she displayed the calmness of a sage, and the pious hope of a sincere Christian.

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CHAPTER III.

Hortense is placed under the care of Madame Campan—Great pains bestowed on her education—Her intimacy with Stéphanie Beauharnais and Caroline Bonaparte—Her affection for Adéle Auguié—Instructions of Josephine to Madame Campan, for the education of her niece Stéphanie.

The conspicuous services rendered by Madame Campan, under the empire, in the field of education, have created for her the most solid claims to public esteem. She possessed every requisite for forming the mind, the heart, and the manners of youth. On the last, she could bestow the polished urbanity of the old court, where her superior talents and knowledge had obtained honourable notice. At the age of fifteen, she had been appointed reader to the daughter of Louis XV.; and Maria Antoinette shortly afterwards attached her more immediately to her own person, by promoting a marriage with her private secretary. Ruined like so many others, by the revolution, she determined after the 9th Thermidor, to turn her talents to account by

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opening a boarding school. In a short time, the reputation of St. Germain rivalled the ancient renown of the establishment of St. Cyr, founded by Madame de Maintenon. Every distinguished personage of the day was sure to have a relative under the care of Madame Campan, and some of her scholars afterwards rose to royalty. Even the amusements of St. Germain yielded in nothing to those of St. Cyr; for though the former could boast no Racine as its religious laureate, yet the young and gifted pupils alternately performed his Esther and Athalie—the great master-pieces of the French drama. If they were not honoured by the presence of Louis le Grand, their audience was composed of that crowd of young soldiers who already gave lustre to the arms of France, and their judge was he whose name was but another name for victory, and whose exertions promised the restoration of its depressed arts to his suffering country.

Among the companions of Hortense at Madame Campan's, were her cousin Stephanie, afterwards Grand Dutchess of Baden—Caroline Bonaparte, the future Queen of Naples, and several others, both relatives and connections by her mother's second marriage. But in forming one of those friendships of childhood, which become almost a part of our nature, and seldom end

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but with life, Hortense was guided neither by the ties of blood, nor the pride of rank. The person to whom she became most attached was not a relation, nor was she destined to royalty. A niece of Madame Campan—Adéle Auguié, afterwards Madame de Broc—became her constant and faithful attendant. She followed Hortense on her departure from St. Germain, and remained with her until their friendship was severed by death.

Notwithstanding the apparent equality of all the boarders, it was almost impossible to prevent the relatives of him who ruled France and dictated to Europe, from being spoiled by their companions and their mistress. At the same time the care bestowed by Madame Campan on the education of Hortense, was far from being lost. This sagacious instructress delighted to repeat that "talents were the wealth of the rich and the ornament of the poor." Her pupil—besides acquiring the general branches of education—excelled in all the agreeable accomplishments, and the success of her debut in society fully justified the truth of the favourite maxim. The following valuable letter shows how completely Josephine had retained in the midst of grandeur, her native modesty, simplicity, and justness of principle.

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TO MADAME DE CAMPAN—ST. GERMAIN.

"In returning you my niece, my dear Madame Campan, I send you both thanks and reproof—thanks, for the brilliant education you have given her, and reproof for the faults which your acuteness must have noticed, but which your indulgence has passed over. She is good tempered, but cold; well informed, but disdainful; lively, but deficient in judgment. She pleases no body, and it gives her no pain. She fancies the renown of her uncle and the gallantry of her father are every thing. Teach her; but teach her plainly, without mincing, that in reality they are nothing. We live in an age, when every one is the child of his own deeds; and if they who fill the highest ranks of public service enjoy any superior advantage or privilege, it is the opportunity of being more useful and more beloved. It is thus alone that good fortune becomes pardonable in the eyes of the envious. This is what I would have you to repeat to her constantly. I wish her to treat all her companions as her equals; many of them are better, or at least quite as deserving as she is herself, and their only inferiority is in not having had relations equally skilful or equally fortunate.

JOSEPHINE BONAPARTE."

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CHAPTER IV.

Bonaparte and Barras—Eugene Beauharnais—Marriage of Bonaparte and Josephine—Visits of Hortense to her mother—M. de Paulo, a royalist leader, aspires to the hand of Hortense—Opposition of the first consul, and discontent of Hortense.

We have already mentioned Barras and Tallien as friends of Madame de Beauharnais. Bonaparte, then a general officer, also belonged to their circle, and his feelings were excited towards Josephine by the following occurrence. A general disarming of the people was one of the chief precautionary measures of police, undertaken after the insurrection of Vendemiaire, and entrusted to him for execution, in his capacity of commander in chief of the army of the interior. One day his aide-de-camp, Lemarrois, introduced a boy of fourteen, who earnestly begged the return of a sword seized by the police: it had been the weapon of his father, once in the chief command of the forces of the republic, and it seemed an act of ingratitude thus

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to deprive a son of the last relic of an unfortunate and respected parent. The sword was returned, and on seeing it, the boy burst into tears. The firmness, enthusiasm, graceful manners, and filial affection of the young Eugene, for it was he, excited a lively interest in Bonaparte, and induced him to mention the occurrence to Barras at an evening party. Madame Beauharnais appeared shortly afterwards, and Bonaparte congratulated her on possessing so interesting a son. Before the end of the evening, he became convinced that Josephine was worthy of being the mother of Eugene; the intimacy thus begun, gave rise to a mutual attachment, which increased every day, and soon terminated in marriage. This was in 1796. Bonaparte set out for his memorable campaign of Italy, and subsequently embarked for Egypt. After the latter expedition the whole family was reunited, for Hortense, then about seventeen, frequently left her boarding school to pay long visits to Paris.

On his arrival at the capital, Bonaparte resumed the same laborious and secluded manner of life which he had led on returning from Rastadt—appearing but little in public; always occupying a latticed box at the theatre; frequenting none but literary society, and never dining with the directors, except in private. He found

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it, indeed, impossible to decline the public dinner given to him by the legislative councils in the Temple of Victory, (St. Sulpice); but he only remained an hour, and quitted the entertainment in company with Moreau. This retirement, which appeared a necessary relaxation from his labours in the service of the state, was universally respected. The resumption of habits which had ever distinguished important epochs in his career, was attributed by many to deep designs for restoring the dignity of the nation, and for alleviating the public distress.

The conspiracies against the directory had now become universal. On all sides, Bonaparte was entreated to place himself at the head, not of a rebellion, but of a revolution. He was even made the confidant of the various schemes and designs which divided the members of the government, for there were plots among the directors themselves. The position of the different factions may be thus described. Augereau and Bernadotte, representing the radicals of the *Manège*, offered to place him at the head of the republic. Others again proposed the overthrow both of the directory and the manège. Among these was Fouché, who had broken with the latter; and who, though a member of the ministry, had commenced the same game which he afterwards continued to play with all the succes-

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sive governments. Bonaparte was also exposed to the flatteries of another minister, who, if his conduct has partaken too much of the rapid versatility of the events, in which for forty years he has taken such active part, at least offers some atonement by all the personal superiority that genius and profound knowledge can bestow on a statesman. Such has been the ascendancy of his distinguished merit, that every new dynasty has paid to it the tribute of official employment. Influencing the diplomacy of Europe for many years; moving all the wires at pleasure; directing in secret every spring, he thus became indispensable to the ambitious; who, after seizing the supreme power, availed themselves of his experience to retain their elevation.

Among the directors themselves, discord was at its height; and they intrigued separately with Bonaparte for the destruction of their joint power. Siéyes, with many members of the council of ancients, solicited him to head the moderate party, who were to establish a constitution which he had prepared in secret. Roger Ducos was the mere shadow of Siéyes, and his constant concurrence with his colleague might be taken for granted. Barras, Moulins, and Gohier, were all desirous that Bonaparte should resume the command of the army of Italy: the first, in order to withdraw him from politics;

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the others merely to employ him as the military engine of their power. They were not aware that the times of the 18th Fructidor had gone by. These plots were generally known: the most formidable was still a secret.

Bonaparte's counsellors in the present critical position of his affairs, were all men of talents and experience, such as Cambaceres, Rœderer, Réal, and Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely. Siéyes, a Provençal and an old acquaintance of the ambitious general, was the only director who possessed any share of his confidence, and in fact was the only one who deserved it. As for Barras and Moulins, he had long known how to appreciate them.

On the 8th of Brumaire, Bonaparte dined with Barras,—who communicated to him in pretended confidence, his determination to retire from the head of affairs. The chief director explained the necessity of adopting another form of government for France, and of selecting General Hédouville as the only proper president of the republic. As for Bonaparte, he proposed to place him at the head of a French army, with which he should conquer the whole Cisalpine commonwealth, and retain its sovereignty for his own private profit. It was clear that the name of Hédouville was a mere cover for that of Barras himself, and Bonaparte, by a single glance,

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gave him to understand that the design was perfectly comprehended. On quitting the director, the general sought out Siéyes, to whom his own plan of revolution was exhibited, They were soon agreed, and the execution of their project was arranged for some period between the 15th and 20th of Brumaire.

The news of this conference with his colleague soon reached Barras, and it produced a visit to Bonaparte early next morning, in which the confidence of the preceding day was renewed, and the blame of the weakness of his plans laid on the impotence of the government. He concluded by declaring that he threw himself on the mercy of the only man who could save his country. Bonaparte was much less open in his explanations: he disclaimed all right to this title, and alleged that the restoration of his health and the tranquillity of repose, were all that he desired. It was about this time that Siéyes commenced taking lessons in riding: a piece of news which amused the gossips of Paris, and especially Barras, who took great delight in watching from his window the new gymnastics of his grave colleague.

In the mean time, the garrison of Paris, which had served in Italy up to the 13th of Vendemiaire—the forty-eight adjutants of the National Guard, who had been appointed by Bona-

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parte after that epoch—and General Moraud, commandant of the capital, had united in a request to be presented to Napoleon and afterwards reviewed. The ceremony was deferred from day to day. At length, on the 15th, Bonaparte and Siéyes had a last decisive interview: the plan of revolution was definitely settled, and its execution appointed for the 18th.

Early on the 17th the commandant of Paris, the regiments of the garrison, and the adjutants of the sections, were requested to attend at Bonaparte's residence in the Rue Chantereine, at seven in the morning of the succeeding day. As this visit had been long arranged, no importance was attached to it. The various officers on whom any reliance could be placed, were also invited for the same hour. All of these individuals, firmly impressed with the popular belief in the immediate departure of the general for the army of Italy, imagined that they were only to receive orders relative to this subject. Neither Moreau nor Macdonald had directly solicited any participation in the arrangements of the plot, of which the existence alone had been confided to them; but they had offered to assist its execution, and, with General Lefevre, the commandant of the division, were invited to the rendezvous in the Rue Chantereine. All arrived at the appointed time: Bernadotte was

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brought by Joseph Bonaparte. At half past eight a messenger appeared from the council of ancients, bearing a decree passed by the influence of Siéyes and his cabal. It was the first manifesto of the revolution, and conferred the supreme military command on Bonaparte. Immediate use was made of the new power, by intrusting all the important parts of the capital to his adherents. Thus the directors, who were ignorant of all these events until about ten o'clock, found themselves, in one moment, without power, without protection, and deprived of all confidence in the council, the commander in chief, and the army. In this emergency, Moulins proposed to Barras and Gohier, to have Bonaparte instantly arrested and shot; but he changed his mind when the Luxembourg was surrounded by a strong guard. He then, along with Gohier, sent in his resignation, and with him was confined in the palace of the government; from which, however, he succeeded in making his escape. Barras obtained a safe conduct, and a detachment to escort him to Gros Bois. Thus ended the Directory. On the succeeding day, the famous scene occurred at the *Orangerie* of St. Cloud; when Bonaparte, seconded by the firmness and presence of mind of his brother Lucien, as well as by the bayonets of his grenadiers, succeeded in dissolv-

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ing the council of five hundred, and shutting up their place of meeting.

After the 18th of Brumaire, Bonaparte and his family resided at the Tuileries. Here the mild graces of Hortense appeared to great advantage, contrasted with the glittering display of a new court, alive with the stir of military glory. She was courted by the richest and noblest of France, and had now full scope for the indulgence of those pleasing anticipations of a future which so rarely falls out according to our hopes or our fears. But France, under the sway of the first consul, was mightier than the France of the old monarchy: who might then aspire to the honour of alliance with its sovereign? The sad destiny of princesses—the obligation of love according to political necessity—must have appeared to Hortense a heavy drawback upon all her grandeur. Girls of seventeen are not long in feeling that they possess an eye and a heart, and can conceive no other motive for matrimony than affection. Before this last revolution, the fortune of her adopted father, which, whether in prosperity or evil, ever moved with the strides of a giant, had not attained so high an elevation as to give Hortense reason to fear constraint on her inclinations. At her time of life, fancy presents every thing through a false medium, which nothing but experience can re-

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move : but the motions of reason are slow, and she is sometimes too late in destroying the illusion and displaying the mortifying reality.

Before etiquette had changed the drawing room of Madame Bonaparte into the brilliant hall of a sovereign, it was the resort of the highest Parisian society ; a class which, at this time, presented some curious contrasts of character and situation. Around General Bonaparte were, of course, assembled the men of high military rank, and the chief public functionaries of the directory—all more or less decided jacobins, with whom it was yet necessary to preserve a good understanding. Josephine, on the other hand, was the centre of a circle composed of the courtiers of the old monarchy, who more or less openly regretted the ancient order of things. You might see a returned emigrant, still nominally under sentence of death, seated next to a member of the very convention which had pronounced that sentence : while further on, a royalist leader, secretly jealous of the renown of the soldier and the power of the civilian, concealed his envy under an affectation of contempt. The perfect good breeding of Madame Bonaparte, with the grave and imposing carriage of her husband, harmonised all these various incongruities.

Hortense frequently made her appearance

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in the drawing room, and according to court gossip, was much struck with an individual conspicuous for all the qualities most admired by very young ladies—a dashing reputation, a fine figure, and bold yet polished manners. This personage was M. de Paulo, a royalist of extravagant enthusiasm, who was said to have excited an insurrection of the peasantry in the vicinity of Toulouse. His good mien, his cast of character, and especially his misfortunes, were found irresistible by Mademoiselle Beauharnais, and even Josephine was so far led away as to allow some talk of marriage! But the bombast and vanity of young Paulo were by no means to the taste of the first consul, who exiled him forthwith to Languedoc.

In the eyes of a girl of seventeen, faults of this description are seldom unpardonable in an admirer, especially when accompanied by striking qualities. If Paulo had been loved before for the dangers he had run, he became even more interesting when persecuted in the cause of love. Hortense had been duly impressed with tales of the glories of the old monarchy, under which her ancestors had played so distinguished a part, and her mind was filled with descriptions of those gallant, graceful, and polished nobles, who are only to be found in the atmosphere of a court. De Paulo seemed in some measure to

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realise these fancies. The throne had fallen, but he was still loyal. Fidelity in misfortune gave him a melancholy interest, and inspired that kind of enthusiasm, always displayed by women towards those who suffer for the sake of principle. His exile gave the last touch of the picture, by adding the mellowing effects of absence to the attractions of adversity and first love.

Hortense never saw Paulo again. Even if they had met in after life, there can be no question but that her ripened judgment and correct good sense would have confirmed the decision of the consul. We may, however, be allowed to fancy that the remembrance of her lover, such as he first appeared to her imagination, sometimes recurred to her memory; and that this phantom of childish romance perhaps disturbed the pomps of royalty, and increased the melancholy monotony of grandeur.

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CHAPTER V.

Marriage of Hortense and Louis Bonaparte—Their dissentions—Character of Louis—Character of Hortense—Madame de Montesson—Bonaparte proposes to adopt the son of Hortense—Coronation of Napoleon—Louis made Constable of France—Birth of Hortense's second son.

State policy had broken off one marriage—state policy now arranged another. In uniting their own fortunes, Napoleon and Josephine seemed to have tacitly agreed to work in concert for the advancement of their families. One of the most certain and expeditious modes of forwarding this design, was to promote as many mutual alliances as could possibly be effected. The consul looked upon Louis Bonaparte, whom he had brought up, rather in the light of a son than a brother: on her side, Josephine was particularly anxious to unite him to her daughter, and they were acordingly married in the month of January, 1802.

Louis Bonaparte, Napoleon's third brother,

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born at Ajaccio, the 2d of September, 1778, entered the army at an early age, and served in the famous campaigns of Italy and Egypt. Several of his letters from the latter country were intercepted and published by the English. They are every where filled with the sound philosophy and love of mankind which may be called the basis of his character. The indignant distress excited in his heart by the cruelties and calamities of warfare are especially remarkable. He quitted Egypt on the 14th of March, 1799, and returned to France, bearing despatches from his brother to the directory.

After Brumaire, when Napoleon had become first consul, Louis was appointed on a diplomatic mission to St. Petersburg: but the violent death of the Emperor Paul induced him to stop at Berlin, where he remained nearly a year. On his return to Paris, he received the command of the 9th regiment of dragoons, and was shortly afterwards appointed general of brigade. It was at this period that his union with Hortense took place.

Had the choice of these parties been unfettered, each possessed qualities which might have produced a mutual attachment: but the desire of happiness was exchanged for a submission to necessity, and objects present a very different appearance when regarded from opposite points

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of view. The character of Louis was the reverse of that of Hortense. A great moralist has remarked that this was the best reason for expecting future sympathy; but it frequently happens that the same wheels, which by properly meeting would accomplish all the objects of the mechanic, clash and crush each other by an untimely revolution.

The newly married couple treated their union as the work of compulsion, and their little asperities, instead of being smoothed by gentle friction, were in constant collision. Louis had some romance in his disposition, but it was that kind of romance which leads its possessor rather to write a book than to enact the hero. The *Contrat Social* of Rousseau was the favourite study of one, whose duty it became to assist in the overthrow of his country's liberties, and who was doomed one day to be a king. Louis was enthusiastically devoted to visions of universal peace, and yet fate had condemned him to be a soldier. He hated ceremony, and yet his life was spent in a court, and his motions were a perpetual pageant. Preferring retirement and speculative reflection, he was hurried along by the whirlwind of his brother's genius.

Cottages and shepherdesses we may fancy as the subjects of the love dreams of Louis. It was impossible to imagine more sweetness, be-

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nevolence, and simplicity of taste, than were to be found united in the character of Hortense; but she added the qualities befitting a queen, and her superior mind was prepared for every change of fortune. She possessed a quick and decided temper, a strong intellect, and a considerable share of ambition: but her chief desire was that which forms the most ardent wish of every wife, and especially of every queen—that the renown of her husband should elevate and gratify her pride. Louis's military career had not been without distinction: his literary productions had been admired throughout Europe, for their humane and correct principles: his family name had become the proudest in history —but he was the brother of Napoleon, and every minor light was dimmed by the sun of his glory.

Both were therefore far from looking forward to marriage, with that expectation of happiness which many feel so sensibly at the moment of union. Their gloom was the more observed, because the domestic incidents in the first consul's family, had already assumed the importance of political events. The ambassadors of the various powers were all present at a grand ball given by Madame de Montesson in honour of these nuptials: and thus a Bourbon's widow

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acted as mistress of ceremonies to the chief of the republic. Napoleon, acustomed to domineer over fortune, and seemingly careless of petty incongruities, perhaps sometimes felt a secret satisfaction in producing the singularity of such contrasts.

The new husband was at least resolved to assert his independence as far as it lay in his power. The first consul offered to adopt the eldest son, which at that period was equivalent to the gift of a monarchy. Louis could not oppose the advancement of his child, but he ventured to refuse his consent to the formality of an adoption. When Napoleon became emperor, all his brothers were named as possible successors to the imperial crown. In the mean time the most splendid dignities of the empire were conferred on Louis; he appeared at the coronation as constable of France—he was recognised as a prince of the blood—appointed colonel-general of carabineers—governor of Piedmont, and governor of Paris. His second son was christened by the pope, who had come to Paris to anoint the emperor with the holy oil.

It was at this brilliant period of Hortense's life, that the fine collection of *romances* appeared, which has ranked her among the most tasteful of our musical composers. The saloons of

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Paris—the solitude of exile*—the most remote countries—have all acknowledged the charm of these delightful melodies, which need no royal name to enhance their reputation. It is gratifying to our pride of country, to hear these airs of France sung by the Greek and the Russian, and united to national poetry on the banks of the Thames and the Tagus. The homage thus rendered is the more flattering, because the rank of the composer is usually unknown. It is their intrinsic merit which gives to these natural effusions of female sensibility the power of universal success. If Hortense ever experienced matrimonial felicity, it must have been at this time. The union blessed with children seems sanctioned by Providence. Hortense had already two sons, and the maternal tenderness, conjugal anxiety, and the pride of a princess, were all gratified in their fullest extent. Every thing around her appeared to reflect glory, renown, and happiness. Josephine was seated

* When Madame de Stael and her beautiful friend Madame Récamier, were exiled to the old castle of Chaumont-sur-Loir, formerly the residence of Diana of Poictiers, one of their favourite songs was that fine air composed by the Queen of Holland, which has for its burthen her husband's motto—"Fais ce que dois—advienne que pourra."—(Do well, come what may).

Ten years of Exile, by Madame de Stael, p. 112.

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on the first throne in the world: Eugene reigned as a viceroy at Milan; while the head of this exalted family, a king of kings, could bestow on his brothers, the monarchies raised by his military genius, and consolidated by his political talents. The brows of Hortense seemed destined for a diadem: Napoleon willed it, and Louis became king of Holland.

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CHAPTER VI.

Kingdom of Holland created—Repugnance of Louis to accept the crown—Hortense a queen—Before her departure she obtains from Napoleon the recall of Madame de Gévres—Hortense arrives at the Hague—She is received with enthusiasm.

In the year 1805, Schimmelpeninck had been invested with the whole executive power of the Batavian republic, under the title of grand pensionary. He was properly impressed with the magnitude of the favour received, and promised to prove his gratitude. Unfortunately his views of policy were soon found to be in direct opposition to those of Napoleon. The grand pensionary encouraged the trade with England, and the commercial speculations of the Dutch were enormously profitable from the almost entire prohibition of English manufactures throughout Europe. This connection with the sworn enemy of France, and Schimmelpeninck's subsequent loss of sight, furnished sufficient excuses for the emperor's intended change in the go-

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vernment of Holland, and the Batavian republic was erectedinto a monarchy. In May, 1806, a deputation consisting of vice-admiral Verhuel, Bracdzen, ambassador at Paris, Van Styreau, minister of their high mightinesses, Gogel, minister of finance, and W. Six, councillor of state, offered the crown to Louis in behalf of the republic; and on the 5th of June, the emperor, at St. Cloud, proclaimed him king of Holland—continuing at the same time his former office of constable of France.

The first offer of the throne was met by an absolute refusal on the part of Louis; who declared the climate of Holland unsuited to his weak state of health. This reply was by no means conclusive: there were other kingdoms, less cold and less humid, at the disposal of Napoleon, and in his eyes, the resolution of his brother appeared too extraordinary to be immoveable. It would have proved so, however, had not the will of the emperor been the law. Louis would have preferred a life of seclusion: "it is better to die a king," was the laconic answer of Napoleon. The danger was by no means so imminent as Louis would have wished it to appear: the constitution of the new monarch was, however, extremely delicate, and bodily weakness increased the natural gloom of his sombre and melancholy temperament. If

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the refusal was dictated by pure philosophy, we cannot but admire it, even if our own feelings disable us from imitation. In the peculiar circumstances under which Louis and Hortense were placed, they were partners in fortune as well as in happiness. Napoleon was as anxious to bestow a crown on his adopted daughter, as a sceptre on his brother. If Louis adhered to his resolution, it was, on the part of Hortense, a sort of abdication, unless the Salic law, so venerated in France, were abolished in Holland. The chance of becoming a king, might therefore be considered as a part of their marriage contract. The force of this reasoning was at length understood by Louis, and he abandoned his unjust opposition.

In the midst of the enjoyment of new dignity, and of benevolent plans for the future welfare of her subjects, the happiness of Hortense was clouded by the necessary separation from her mother and her home. It was the first severance for any length of time, which had occurred during her whole life. The prospect of departure from the scenes of infancy now revived all her childish feelings and attachments, and the pain thus created divided her heart with the anticipation of future grandeur. She wished at least to bid adieu to France in a manner worthy of a kind and compassionate princess. She

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learned that Madame de Gévres,* a noble lady of the court of Louis XVI., ruined by the revolution, had fruitlessly endeavoured to obtain permission to revisit the place of her birth. Hortense could now feelingly appreciate this patriotic attachment: she solicited and obtained from the emperor, the recall of Madame de Gévres, and her farewell to her country was thus commemorated by another deed of heavenly charity.

On the 18th of June, 1806, Louis and his queen arrived in their new dominions. They took up their residence at the Maison des Bois, a country seat about a league from the Hague, where they received the various congratulatory deputations. Their public entry into the capital was delayed until five days later. Louis was well known in Holland, which he had visited on former occasions, and the curiosity of the Dutch was therefore chiefly directed towards the queen, whom they now saw for the first time. At the Hague, as in all other countries, love is the promptest and most universal cause of popular enthusiasm. Louis was highly esteemed and venerated, but fear always predominates in the respect inspired by a king: whilst a young and

* The last descendant of the celebrated Du Guesclin. She died in 1831, at an advanced age.

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lovely queen fascinates all eyes and wins every heart. The Hollanders, who received Hortense with joyous acclamations, might easily have believed that the fair being before them, had been created by heaven expressly for their sovereign.

In her appearance, Hortense united the fine figure, noble mien, and graceful manners of her mother, to the peculiar charms of the beauties of the Netherlands—their soft blue eyes—profusion of fair hair—and dazzling complexion. Her conversation displayed the elegance of a Frenchwoman, in the vivacity, sprightliness, and appropriate turn of her least expressions. During her residence at the Hague, that sober capital presented an appearance as gay as it was unexpected, in a constant succession of public balls and entertainments, at which the most distinguished youth contended for superiority in dress and accomplishments. The dancing of the queen was perfection, and she promoted this delightful amusement, with that true condescension, which produces in every mind the forgiveness, but never the forgetfulness of superior rank.

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CHAPTER VII.

Independent conduct of Louis—He removes the French from about his person—M. de Broc sent to Spain—Sketch of the court of Holland.

As soon as the king had assumed the reins of government, he began to use every exertion in his power to merit the affection which his subjects already professed from confidence in his virtues. To promote sedulously all the various interests of the country, seemed to him a certain means of succeeding in his endeavour. "I desire," said he, in reply to a deputation, "to be saluted by the title of *national majesty*." He declined the services of a body of French troops, which had been sent to accompany him to his capital; it was his wish that the escort of his entry should consist of Hollanders alone. This delicate proceeding made a very favourable impression, and its success induced the adoption of further measures of a similar character. As all the officers of the household were Frenchmen appointed at Paris, it was natural for the aristocracy of Holland to view

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this exclusive preference with deep mortification: they justly considered that the duties of welcome and attendance on the foreign prince given to them as a monarch, belonged of right to the natives of the soil. Louis entertained the same sentiments, and gradually removed the French, under various pretexts, from all the posts of importance, which were speedily filled by Hollanders.

Among other dismissions was that of the grand marshal of the palace, M. de Broc, whom Queen Hortense had united to her friend Adèle Auguié, the sister-in-law of Marshal Ney. Louis despatched him on a message of congratulation to Madrid, on the accession of King Joseph, and as he was never recalled, he returned to the French service. His wife remained with Hortense, for the queen could never part from the faithful depositary of all her griefs; while she repaid the confidence with that sympathy so essential to their endurance. Braving every thing, even the open indignation of the king, Madame de Broc supported her friend, and repelled the malignant suspicions and insidious calumnies which assailed the reputation of her sovereign and benefactress. Ah! why should the ties of such an attachment ever be destroyed?

A just appreciation of his political position, and of the decision and perseverance displayed

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in making every necessary sacrifice, shows that Louis was too diffident of his abilities, when he declined a throne; indeed we doubt whether any of his brothers could have filled it more worthily. In receiving the investiture of Holland, there were but two lines of policy to be adopted. As a mere imperial prefect, the new king was to sacrifice independence by subjecting every thing to France, and to annihilate the prosperity of a people wholly dependent on maritime commerce, by forcing upon them the continental system; or on mounting the throne he was to assume at once the duties and dignity of a sovereign, and as such, to act exclusively for the welfare of his kingdom. The former alternative would undoubtedly have excited insurrection, and to make war on his subjects is, for a monarch, but an indifferent style of reigning. The latter plan was far more honourable; instead of being the mere instrument of another's caprice, it was to reject all subserviency, and to be really a king. It is true that in either case, the final consummation would inevitably be the occupation of Holland by the imperial armies; but there is no room for self-reproach when we have followed the conclusions of reason and the dictates of conscience. Louis had taken for his motto, "DO WELL, COME WHAT MAY."

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Unhappily the king, though the one most interested in deciding correctly, was the only person who saw things in this light. The highest offices, it is true, were filled up by natives of Holland, yet many inferior employments were in the hands of the French, In proportion to the coldness and distance exhibited by Louis towards his countrymen, the queen believed herself obliged to increase the consolation of encouragement and courtesy. The favour she showed was the more sincere, because she really disapproved of the policy which rendered their situation so delicate. Placed, in a manner, between her husband and her adopted father, she may be pardoned for believing in the infallibility of one, whose iron will had well ministered, in every conjuncture, to the advancement of his glory. It is true that in espousing the interests of the French, she lost nothing of the attachment of her subjects, but the difference in the behaviour of the royal pair involved the court in perpetual contests. The rivalry apparent in the smallest details of the palace betrayed this misunderstanding, the results of which must necessarily be so disastrous to the general weal.

The situation of Rotterdam is delightful, its

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appearance is handsome and its streets particularly clean. There is a superb road leading to the Hague, pleasantly laid out along the canal, and shaded by fine trees. It runs through vast meadows, covered with cattle, and displaying a verdure of the most splendid green. The view, which would be otherwise monotonous, is diversified by a multitude of small country seats, not built perhaps with the most correct taste, but pleasing from their remarkable neatness, and the beautiful gardens of the rarest plants, by which they are surrounded and adorned.

Holland displays a peculiar character; it is like nothing but itself—a conquest from the sea, preserved by the constant repair of its dykes. Its inhabitants are well provided with the means of subsistence and comfort, and are extremely conscientious in the discharge of every duty connected with the government. They are brave soldiers: Bonaparte has openly pronounced this opinion, and they enjoyed the same character in the days of Tacitus. Their probity is extraordinary: nearly all their contracts are verbal, yet they are as scrupulous in the obligations of commerce, as in the engagements of love or the promises of marriage.

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An outline of the court of Holland may not be inappropriate. M. D'Arjuson held the post of grand chamberlain: Auguste Caulaincourt that of grand equerry. M. de Villeneuve was first chamberlain to the queen: his wife, the daughter of M. Guibert—a lady celebrated for her wit and her fine person—was *dame du palais*. M. de Saugras, chief master of the ceremonies did the honours of the palace in an extremely agreeable manner.

M. de Girardin tells us, that a chamberlain introduced him into the cabinet of the king, who was dressed in the uniform of the guard, white, with crimson facings. "The pleasure of seeing him after a long absence, was diminished by my sorrow at observing his sallow complexion, an aspect of general languor, and the extreme difficulty he experienced in walking, and especially in standing. He looked so much like a man on whom death had set his seal, that I found it impossible to restrain the feelings of sadness with which his appearance oppressed me. My emotion became so strong that it was noticed by his majesty, and drew from him several remarks, though I sincerely hope that he was unable to divine the cause. It is impossible to know the king and not to love him: he is gifted with all the inestimable qualities that belong to an upright man. I was the

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bearer of two letters; one from the king of Naples, and the other from his mother. He conversed with us a long time, and expressed great pleasure at seeing us again. I mentioned that a passage in his letter to the queen of Naples, had given rise to my journey. 'Be assured,' was his reply, 'that I shall use every exertion in my power to be useful to Joseph: whatever belongs to me is at his disposal. I am already endeavouring to raise money, though it will be a difficult business; for this country would never lend, even to Napoleon. However, I do not despair, and shall do my best.' All this was said in that open frank manner, which no dissimulation, however practised, can pretend to imitate. 'Your majesty,' said I, 'has just opened a loan, which, I understand, is filling up rapidly. It is a splendid reward of your exertions, and the most flattering testimony of the popularity of your administration. Posterity will ever remember with gratitude, your constant opposition to a national bandruptcy.' 'I take the more credit to myself,' said the king, 'for this opposition, because the measure was particularly pressed upon me by the emperor. I found it impossible to persuade him, that in declaring bankruptcy, I declared the destruction of Holland. All its capital would have immediately sought refuge in England, where much

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of it is collected already. The force of circumstances has set on foot a contraband trade, which I find it impracticable to suppress. This nation is so industrious, that with a population of not more than eighteen hundred thousand souls, it pays one hundred and ten millions. Its debt is sixty millions, and there is scarcely enough remaining for state expenses. There is not a French soldier in the kingdom, yet I am obliged to supply a corps of twenty thousand Dutch troops for the grand army. Peace! peace! that must be the grand object of conquest. This hard work ruins my health, Girardin; you must find me very much changed. I can scarcely write; I walk with great difficulty.' —He was continually rubbing his legs and hands during the whole interview.—'The climate of this country is killing me. Its humidity is very unwholesome for my constitution. I am sorry for it: it is the country of good faith. There is no need here of superintending the administration: a man, on receiving an appointment, swears that he will fulfil its duties to the best of his ability, and keeps his word. Their custom-house oaths are never examined, and are never false. It is a nation of true republicans, but deeply tinged with party spirit: this prevents them from forming a proper estimate

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of each other. . . . . I require a hot climate, and the baths of the south of France.'

"On taking leave of his majesty, we were informed by M. Boucheberné, prefect of the palace, that the king desired us to lodge in no other house than his own, and that we were to reside in the palace: this intelligence was afterwards confirmed by M. de Saugras. Just as we were sitting down to table, we were invited to dine with the queen. The company consisted of an aid-de-camp of Jerome, Madame de Bourber, and the little Prince Louis.

"The queen was as agreeable and amiable as ever. I delivered her the letters from the empress and the queen. 'I always like to receive letters,' said she, 'and to be remembered. My friends would be ungrateful if they forgot me, for I never forget any one. My brother Joseph ought certainly to be pleased with me; for, while I was at Mayence, I wrote to him frequently, and sent him a great quantity of trifling news, which absence alone renders of the least consequence.'

"After dinner, we went into the queen's drawing room. Her apartments are furnished with great simplicity. Nothing could be more gracious than our reception, and on leaving her, she invited us to prolong our visit to this country, and to pay our respects to her every even-

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ing. Before going to bed, we made a round of visits to all the ministers, and returned to our hotel at ten o'clock at night, heartily tired. All the French about the king's person are loud in their complaints of the climate: Caulaincourt, whose health is indifferent, is quite unable to stand its effects.

"Next day, the king received us in his cabinet. He was in the midst of a circle of the great civil and military officers. He quitted his place for the purpose of addressing a few words in an obliging manner to the different members of the diplomatic corps, and the various individuals who had the honour of being admitted to the audience.

"The court presents an extremely brilliant spectacle. The dresses of the public ministers and the civil functionaries are superbly embroidered: it seems as if they intended to make up for the long prohibition of embroidery in this country. The great officers of state wear a green dress, laced with gold: the pattern of the trimming is the same as that of the imperial household. The chamberlains are dressed in red and gold: the equerries and prefects in blue and gold. The diplomatic costume of Holland is remarkably rich and elegant: it is a shade of very light blue, with silver lace. The decoration of the Order of Holland has been very ex-

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tensively distributed: there are three classes—knights, commanders, and grand crosses. This sort of distinction has become quite an object of ambition, in a country where it was previously wholly unknown. Wherever men are united in society, vanity, adroitly flattered, is one of the most potent instruments of the sway of the ruler.

"The king generally rides with a single pair of horses to his carriage: it is only on very rare occasions that he uses a coach and six. Whenever he goes out, the equerry on duty mounts his horse, and takes his place near the door."

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CHAPTER VIII.

Death of Hortense's eldest son—Smugglers pardoned by Louis—Letter of Napoleon to his brother.

Calamity reunited Louis and Hortense, and restored for a time domestic concord, by overwhelming them with misfortune. In the beginning of May, 1807, their eldest son, the young Prince Napoleon, was suddenly carried off by the croup; a disease of which even the name was, until then, unknown in France.

The grief of Hortense, which was vehement in proportion to the strength of mind it had overcome, excited serious apprehensions for her life. It brought on a series of nervous attacks, that inspired pity in all who approached her. The distress of Louis was not less poignant, though more gloomy and under better command. Their physicians at length recommended the baths of the Pyrenees; perhaps quite as much to remove them from the reminiscences of their lost child, as for any medical properties likely to be useful in the restoration of their health.

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It is one of the burthens of royalty, that a monarch can neither enjoy nor suffer like a private individual: every moment withdrawn from duty, to be devoted to pleasure or sorrow, is marked by a public loss. The Dutch sympathised too deeply in the affliction of their sovereigns to murmur at their seeking consolation in the variety of travel: but, unfortunately, though Louis had rendered them happy in the equitable policy of his personal government, yet he could not prevent the just grounds of complaint that arose from the measures of Napoleon, who administered the affairs of his kingdom during his journey.

The emperor availed himself of this opportunity to introduce into Holland the measures of policy adopted in his own territories. The chief resources of Great Britain were derived from her commerce with the continent, which was the outlet for the immense products of her factories. Collecting by her ships the raw material of every country, she afterwards laid all Europe under contribution by returning them in a manufactured shape. By closing this outlet the sources of her prosperity were dried up, and her most vital interests endangered. Such was the Continental System. The opposition in Holland to its introduction sunk under the ab-

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solute will of Napoleon, and the ministers of Louis obeyed with reluctance and sorrow.

The inhabitants of the sea-ports, deprived of the resources of lawful commerce, attempted to substitute an illicit traffic. The emperor became irritated, and would have made terrible examples of the guilty, but for the return of Louis, who exercised the richest prerogative of royalty, by pardoning the criminals. This clemency, with his courageous humanity at the time of the disaster at Leyden and during several inundations, endeared him still more to his subjects. The contraband trade, however, was greatly augmented by the impunity of the first offenders; and Napoleon, deeply incensed by the opposition to his authority, began to entertain unfriendly feelings towards his brother, and to project seriously the union of Holland and France.

On her return from the Pyrenees, Hortense was prevented from proceeding to the Hague, by her peculiarly delicate state of health. She suffered from general weakness, and had but partially recovered from the nervous attack, brought on by the recent shock. Her domestic happiness had been also much disturbed by the political disputes of her husband and the emperor. Calamities from without strike equally the prince and the peasant in their domestic recoil. The gloomy temper of Louis, exasperated by

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the importunate demands of his brother, no longer permitted him to be kind to a wife, who espoused or excused every measure dictated by the policy of France.

Napoleon's grounds of complaint are contained in a letter addressed to the king of Holland in 1808, on the occasion of the pardon of the smugglers. This historical document is too important to be here omitted; for it forms a valuable appendix to the account of his administration given to the public by Louis, and has a direct bearing on events deeply and fatally influencing the destiny of Queen Hortense.

Chateau de Marac, April 3d, 1808.

Sir, and my brother,—Within the last hour I received your despatch of the 22d March, from the Auditor D—t, and the courier, who will bear you my reply, sets out for Holland immediately. The use you have made of the power of pardon, must inevitably produce bad effects. The power of pardon is one of the finest and noblest attributes of sovereignty: but to save it from contempt, it should only be exercised when the mercy of the sovereign is no reproach to the act of the judge—when the royal clemency can inspire none but generous and grateful sentiments. But the present case is widely different. A troop of banditti attack and murder a party of custom-house officers, in order to smuggle

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with more impunity:—they are condemned to death, and your majesty accords them a pardon—a pardon to outcasts and assassins, whom no one pitied! Had these men been merely taken in the act of smuggling—had they even murdered your officers in self defence—then the destitute condition of their families, and the particular circumstances of the deed, might have been taken into consideration, and the mitigation of the rigour of the law would have gained for your government an appearance of paternal kindness. In remitting the penalty of crimes against fiscal laws, and especially in the forgiveness of political offences, mercy is well bestowed. The great principle is, that when the sovereign himself is the object of the crime, then clemency becomes admirable. On the first rumour of an accusation of this nature, public opinion is arrayed on the side of the culprit, and not in support of the executive which is to enforce the law. Should the prince remit the punishment, the people consider him superior to the offence, and their indignation is then excited against the offender: should he pursue an opposite course, he is reprobated as an oppressor and a tyrant; but if he pardon atrocious criminals, he is contemned for his weakness, or hated for his evil intentions. Do not imagine that mercy is a prerogative which can be always wielded without injury, or that

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society applauds its constant employment. On the contrary, the community condemns its exercise on signal offenders, because it then becomes destructive of social order. You have made use of this right too frequently and too indiscriminately: you should be deaf to your heart's benevolence, when it incites to acts detrimental to your subjects. I should have imitated your conduct with regard to the Jews, but I would never have pardoned the Middleburg smugglers. In the latter case, there were many reasons why justice should have been allowed to take its course, and by the terror of such an execution to attain the excellent effect of preventing future crimes. Royal officers had been massacred in the middle of the night; the murderers were condemned; yet your majesty commutes the punishment for a few years' imprisonment, and the inevitable result will he found in a complete discouragement of the collectors of the revenue.

Let me now explain the political tendency of this measure. For many years past, Holland has been the channel through which England has introduced its manufactures into the continent, and this branch of trade has been immensely profitable to its merchants. For this reason the Dutch are attached to smuggling and favour England, and for this reason they hate France,

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who prohibits smuggling, and wars against England. The pardon you have accorded to these murdering revenue breakers, is a kind of deference paid to the love of Holland for contraband trade. It seems as if you made common cause with them ; but against whom ? Against myself!

The Hollanders are attached to you. Your manners are plain : your disposition mild : your government suited to their views. Were you to show yourself firmly resolved to put down all illicit traffic—were you to explain to your subjects their true position—you would then employ your influence with discretion, and they would believe the continental system a benefit, because it would be upheld by their king. I cannot discover what advantage your majesty proposes to yourself, from popularity obtained at my expense. The days of Ryswick are gone by in Holland, and France is no longer in the last years of Louis XIV. If Holland be unable to pursue an independent policy, she has no alternative but to adhere to the conditions of her alliance with France.

The policy of princes, my brother, must ever regard the future, and not the mere exigencies of the passing day. What is the present condition of Europe ? On the one hand is England, possessing alone a preponderance to which

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the whole world has hitherto been obliged to submit: on the other are the French empire and the powers of the continent; who, with the force of union, can never submit to the species of supremacy exercised by Great Britain. All these nations formerly possessed colonies and foreign commerce: the extent of their seaboard is much greater than that of England; but unfortunately they have been always disunited. Great Britain has attacked their navies in detail —she has triumphed on every sea—and all their maritime forces are destroyed. With all the resources for shipping and seamen, of Russia, Sweden, France, and Spain, not a squadron dare venture from their roadsteads. It is no longer, then, from a league of the maritime powers—a confederacy which is moreover impracticable, from distance and conflicting interests—that Europe must expect commercial independence and established peace: they can only be declared by the will of England.

Peace! I desire to obtain it by every means consistent with the dignity of France: for peace, I will sacrifice all but national honour. Every day I am more and more convinced of its necessity, and the other powers wish for it as much as I do. I entertain towards England, neither angry prejudice nor implacable hatred. Her policy towards me has been the policy of repul-

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sion : on my part, I have retaliated by a system of exclusion ; not so much from the ambitious views alleged by my enemies, as to force the British cabinet to terms. I am perfectly content that England should be rich and prosperous, if France and her allies are as rich and as prosperous as England. Thus the continental system has no other end than to accelerate a final settlement of international law, as well for the French empire as for Europe. All the northern sovereigns maintain a rigorous prohibitive policy, yet their commerce has increased wonderfully : the fabrics of Prussia in particular already begin to rival our own manufactures. You are aware that France itself, and all the extent of coast from the gulf of Lyons to the head of the Adriatic, now an integral part of the empire, are absolutely closed against the products of foreign industry. I am now about to take such a share in the affairs of Spain, as will wrest Portugal from the influence of Great Britain, and place the Spanish ports under the full control of the French political system. Thus the whole seaboard of Europe will be shut against the English, for I exclude the Turks, who have no commerce with the rest of the continent.

You will perceive from this abstract, the fatal consequences of the facilities afforded by Holland to Great Britain for introducing her manu-

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factures into Europe. It affords her an opportunity of raising from ourselves the subsidies with which other nations are paid to attack us. Your majesty is more interested than I am, in guarding against the trickery of English diplomacy. A few years' patience, and England will desire peace as earnestly as her enemies.

Again, if you consider the position of your states, you will discover that the continental system is less beneficial to me than to yourself. Holland is essentially a commercial and maritime power. She possesses capacious harbours, fleets, seamen, skilful officers, and colonies which cost the mother country nothing. Her inhabitants, too, have as much ability in commerce as the English. Has not Holland all this to protect? May not peace restore her to her ancient importance? Grant that her situation for a few years may be painful; is it not better than that the monarch of Holland should be a mere English governor, and his kingdom and colonies the appanages of Great Britain? Any encouragement given to the trade with England must tend directly to this result. Sicily and Portugal are before your eyes.

Let events take their course. If you are obliged to sell your gin, England is obliged to buy it. Point out places where it can be obtained by the British smugglers in return

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for hard money, but never for merchandise: *never—you understand me.* Peace will come at last, and then a treaty of commerce will be signed with England. Very probably I may conclude one too, but our mutual interests shall be guaranteed. If we should be obliged to allow England her maritime supremacy, purchased at the expense of so much blood and treasure—a preponderance, moreover, to which she is entitled by geographical situation, and her territorial acquisitions in three quarters of the globe—at least our vessels will be able to navigate the ocean without the fear of insult to their flag, and our foreign commerce will cease to be ruinous. The main object now is, to prevent England from interfering in the politics of the continent.

This business of the pardons has drawn me into long details, which were necessary to obviate erroneous impressions, if any such had been instilled into your majesty by a Dutch ministry. I request you to reflect seriously on this letter—to make the matters of which it treats a subject of deliberation in your councils, and through your ministers, to give a corresponding impulse to the administration of the government.

France will never permit Holland, under any pretext, to secede from the general cause of the continent. As for the smugglers, since the fault

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has already been committed, and there are no means of recalling the past, I can only advise you not to leave them in the prison of Middleburg, which is too near the scene of their crime: send them to the other end of Holland.

The insertion of this letter seemed necessary to exhibit the true situation of Louis in Holland. Harassed by the constant importunities of his brother, the re-action of his vexation was too often felt by the queen. Was she then sufficiently indulgent? Did she feel that, notwithstanding the inferiority of his genius, her husband could not yield, without pain, to views of policy diametrically opposite to his own? She probably endured as long as it was in her power, the miseries of an union without sympathy: but she was unhappy, and power without happiness has no charms save for the unfeeling and ambitious. The heart of Hortense had been cast in another and a far different mould.

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CHAPTER IX.

Dissensions at the court of Holland—Interview of Louis and Napoleon—The emperor's divorce—Delicate situation of Hortense and Eugene—Josephine's farewell letter to Napoleon.

Louis soon grew weary of his capital, and removed the court to Utrecht, hoping to escape from his own disgust and chagrin. To change of place—the first remedy suggested by unhappiness—the king, in his new abode, sought to add the relief of gaiety. In addition to the ordinary parade of a court, there were frequently small social parties at the palace; and public balls, attended by the best society of the province: but in all these assemblies, seemingly devoted to pleasure, the languor and monotony impressed by the absence of the queen, were but too apparent. All remembered the charm with which her wit and vivacity had enlivened the circles of the Hague, and all regretted the fascination that surrounds a young, affable, and beautiful princess.

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Louis was soon dissatisfied with his residence at Utrecht. He found the town to be too thinly peopled to supply sufficient movement and variety to the court circle. Its inhabitants were chiefly retired merchants, living quietly on their incomes, who were annoyed by the turmoil which thus interrupted their old established habits. While these showed but little gratitude for the preference of their sovereign, the citizens of the Hague, on the other hand, were enraged by his desertion, Either to suppress murmurs, or to indulge once more the love of change, Louis returned again to the north of Holland, where the industry and wealth of the nation were chiefly centered. Amsterdam was finally fixed upon, and received officially the merited title of capital of the kingdom.

As Holland still continued to import great quantities of English merchandise, the cause of the emperor's displeasure was by no means removed. Louis was invited to attend a congress in the city of Paris, of all the sovereigns in alliance with Napoleon. He was perfectly aware of the reproaches that awaited him, and of the projects of his brother ; but he knew also that when the independence of a sovereign is unsupported by military forces, resistance to colossal power is a mere sacrifice of the welfare of his subjects. In the end of November, 1809, the

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king of Holland repaired to Paris, in the vain hope of averting the storm he felt himself unable to withstand.

Louis had little reason to look for a fraternal reception, when he considered the unfriendly relations subsisting between France and Holland, and the mortifications heaped upon him under the sanction of the emperor. It happened quite otherwise. Napoleon received his brother graciously, and in a manner expressive of sincere and ardent friendship. The king was at once surprised and moved; pomp and etiquette were laid aside, and the kindest affection replaced the stiffness of royal dignity. It was a meeting of brothers, after a long and painful estrangement. The pleasure of reconciliation engrossed all their thoughts, and public affairs were never mentioned. Still the king would have desired an open and unhesitating discourse on the various interests which had so long divided the two nations, for past events rendered him suspicious, and the silence of Napoleon left little room for self deceit. The careless manner in which he was treated, soon gave him to understand that the demands on Holland would be mere subjects of official communication—that he was not to be consulted—and that no pains would be taken to secure his approbation, or to ascertain that

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the measure proposed accorded with the interests of Holland.

These gloomy presentiments were soon but too fully realised. The speech of Napoleon to the legislative body announced the sad destiny of Holland. The king would probably have entered his solemn protest before the assembled sovereigns, but care had been taken to exclude him from the invitation which embraced all the other allies of the emperor. The danger became every day more imminent: Louis at length resolved to return privately to his kingdom, and to resist the violent encroachments of his brother, if resistance were yet possible. The secret orders given for his departure were communicated to the emperor, and the king, on his part, ascertained that he was constantly watched by disguised officers of the police: one of them, an old soldier of the fifth regiment of dragoons, having discovered himself to his former colonel. Louis dissimulated, and hoping to elude the vigilance of his guards, feigned total ignorance of this system of observation; but every hope proved vain—every plan was a failure. Neither corruption nor address could extricate him from the toils in which he was involved, and no resource was left better than a disguised flight. A man more robust and resolute than Louis might have quitted Paris at nightfall—mounted

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his horse at the gates—and escaped at full speed; but though still young, the doubtful health of the king prevented all thoughts of so hardy an enterprise. He resolved to despatch one of his attendants secretly to Amsterdam, with positive orders to the minister of war to break the dykes, place the country in a complete state of military preparation, and by every possible exertion to prevent the French forces from occupying the capital. Napoleon, who was soon informed of these measures, made bitter complaints to the king, and gave way to the most furious passion. Louis opposed firmness to violence, and when driven to extremity, avowed openly that the defensive preparations had been undertaken by his express command. "I have been deceived," was his bold expression, "by promises which were never intended to be kept. Holland is weary of being the puppet of France." The emperor, enraged by a dignified opposition to which he was wholly unused was violently excited; Louis met him with the quiet resignation and composure of a good conscience. Napoleon quickly recovered himself, and becoming suddenly calm, informed the king coldly, that he must choose between the union of Holland to France, or the immediate revocation of his warlike instructions, and the removal of his minister of war.

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This result had been the constant object of the king's most lively apprehensions; it was this deadly blow which he had endeavoured most especially to shun. The imperious necessity of his situation compelled submission, and forced him to comply with the demands of those who were armed with irresistible power. In his inmost heart, the noble design was still cherished, of protecting his dominions from their imminent danger; but to effect this, it was first necessary to escape from the species of captivity in which he was held. His renewed atetmpts to elude the vigilance of his domestic spies, were regularly thwarted. Under pretence of the respectful deference due to his exalted rank, their attendance on his person was constant, and they particularly, but with the utmost politeness, opposed all his excursions in the direction of the gate of Flanders.

The first open act of usurpation undertaken against Holland, was the occupation of the fortresses of Bergen-op-Zoom, and Breda, by the Marshal Duke of Reggio, without the knowledge of the king: at the same time the emperor proclaimed the union to France of the whole country between the Meuse, the Scheldt, and the ocean. The captive monarch, incapable of armed resistance, published a protest against

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this flagrant infraction of every principle of international law.

His health was so far affected by these various disturbances and vexations, that for some time he was confined to his bed by a nervous disease. All the different monarchs then assembled in Paris hastened to visit him. Napoleon alone was absent, and this apparent indifference deeply wounded the feelings of his sensitive brother. At length the emperor came, and accosted him with the utmost kindness: but the conversation turned entirely upon indifferent topics, without the slightest mention of politics.

As soon as his health would permit, the king undertook a short journey, for the purpose of settling his position on the score of restraint. He proceeded to his chateau at St. Leu, where the question was resolved to his disappointment and mortification. The measure of sacrifice was not yet filled; concessions far more important than those already made were still to be exacted. As usual, Louis began by resistance, and ended in submission. It was the only means to retain a sovereignty of which he was less tenacious from personal motives than from anxiety to preserve the place of Holland among the independent powers of Europe. Much was yielded, though with deep regret. Every thing that was not lost seemed a clear gain in these unhappy

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negotiations. At length the constant watching of his person ceased. Napoleon became nd when all his demands were conceded, and even endeavoured to renew their former affection. After an absence which instead of lasting one month, had been prolonged to four, Louis took his departure from France. His affliction at this protracted separation from his kingdom, may well be imagined, but every sorrow was forgotten as he approached once more his adopted country, his cherished Holland.

The highest enjoyment of a monarch, the delight of witnessing the joy of his subjects, awaited Louis in his dominions. Dark rumours, hinting that he would never return, had been long circulated, and the sensation produced by his re-appearance was the more enthusiastic in proportion to its being unexpected. The queen also was immediately looked for. Her residence at Paris had been but little happier than her husband's, for the same ambition which excited Napoleon's aggression upon Holland had also inspired the project of an imperial alliance with the house of Austria. Motives seemingly the most opposite, governed the deeds of this extraordinary man. After routing the armies of Francis in a hundred battles—after two entries as a conqueror into the German capital—he rejoiced in consummating the humiliation of his

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enemy, by extorting his consent to the marriage of his daughter. It seemed also to the fortunate soldier, that an alliance with the oldest and haughtiest dynasty of Europe, would seat him legitimately on his uninherited throne.

A second marriage being decreed, it became necessary to annul the first. Long before any direct expression of the imperial will, the quick sighted courtiers had discovered Napoleon's intentions: which were allowed, indeed, to escape by degrees, as if to prepare the public mind, and the feelings of the individuals most deeply interested. In this he was unsuccessful. A palace seldom contains the courage or the indiscretion that will convey unwelcome intelligence to the sovereign, before it assumes an official shape. Notwithstanding all the precautions of her husband, the heart of Josephine was so long a stranger to distrust, that even at the fatal moment of explanation, the blow prepared by the manœuvres of many weeks, and announced through every channel, came at last, with the suddenness and severity of an unexpected shock.

As early as a journey to Fontainebleau in 1807, the word *divorce* had been cautiously whispered by the officers of the imperial household. A sudden death had carried off the eldest son of the queen of Holland; a loss deeply

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regretted by Napoleon. When only seven years of age, the child exhibited a most promising disposition, great mildness of temper, and an aptitude of character capable of receiving the noblest impressions. The first born of the new dynasty had excited and preserved all the solicitude and affection of its founder, who had given him his name, and had proposed adoption. Napoleon indulged the hope of superintending his education, and of making him ultimately the heir of his power: with the death of this child came probably the first thought of centering in himself and his direct line, the hopes and heritage of so many victories.

After the conferences of Schoenbrunn, the idea of a divorce had obtained complete possession of the mind of Napoleon. On his return to France after the conclusion of peace, he proceeded directly to Fontainebleau. His journey had been so well arranged that he arrived many hours before the empress, who had quitted Strasburg, and had been more than a month at Paris. This delay produced severe reproaches on the part of Napoleon, who was seeking excuses for his conduct, even to himself.

"Three days after our arrival at Fontainebleau," says an officer of the household who has since published his memoirs, "I observed some traces of sadness upon the brow of Josephine,

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and much less freedom in Napoleon's manners towards her. One morning after breakfast, the empress did me the honour to converse with me in the recess of a window in her chamber; and after some common-place questions respecting our stay at Schoenbrunn, and the manner in which we passed our time there, she said to me, 'Monsieur de Bausset, I have great confidence in your attachment to me: I hope you will reply with sincerity to the question I am about to ask you.' I assured her of my readiness to give her her all the information in my power, and that I felt at greater liberty to do so, because nothing had been entrusted to me which could bind me to silence. 'Well, then, if you know the reason, tell me why the private communication between my apartment and that of the emperor has been closed.' 'I was entirely ignorant of it, madam, until your present assurance of the fact. I only know that some repairs were commenced, and that they had been suspended in consequence of the emperor having returned much sooner than he was expected. Probably they did not imagine that he would take up his residence at Fontainebleau so late in the season. Your majesty may perceive from the manner in which some of your apartments are furnished, that things are not yet completed.' Such was my answer, and in truth I should have been much

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embarrassed had I made any other, for this was not the time to speak of my private observations. I shall never forget the last words which this estimable princess condescended to address to me: 'Be assured, M. de Bausset, that there is some mystery in all this.' This conversation only served to strengthen the impressions I had received during the negotiations at Schoenbrunn, although I could not foresee the period of the catastrophe, nor how it should be brought about. I was soon better informed."

"The king of Saxony arrived at Paris on the 13th of November, and their majesties left Fontainebleau on the 14th. Napoleon performed the journey on horseback, and immediately after his arrival, he paid a visit to the king, who occupied the palace of L'Elysee. The presence of this virtuous monarch at Paris sometimes interrupted their privacy, but the embarrassment of Napoleon increased proportionably with the uneasiness and vague forebodings of the empress. She appeared to have a strong presentiment of approaching misfortune, and to be gathering her strength to support its bitterness with fortitude.

"I was on duty at the Tuileries, after the 27th of November. On that day, and on the succeeding Tuesday and Wednesday, I could easily observe a great change in the features of the empress, and a mute constraint in the manners of

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Napoleon. If during dinner, he broke the silence, it was only to ask me some brief question, without listening to my reply. On each of these days the dinner was over in less than ten minutes. At length, on Thursday, the 30th, the storm burst. Their majesties sat down at table: Josephine wore a large white hat, which was tied under the chin, and concealed a great part of her face. I thought I could perceive that she had been weeping, and that she still restrained her tears with difficulty. She appeared the image of grief and despair. The most profound silence reigned during the whole meal, and the dishes were touched out of mere form. The only words uttered were when Napoleon asked me 'what kind of weather it was?' In pronouncing them he rose from the table, and Josephine slowly followed. When coffee was served, Napoleon took the cup from the page in waiting; and intimated that he wished to be alone. Anxious, uneasy, and a prey to gloomy reflections, I immediately retired to the attendance hall, where their majesties usually dined, and sat down in an arm chair near the door of the emperor's apartment. I was watching mechanically the removal of the dinner service, when I suddenly heard the empress shriek violently. The usher of the chamber was on the point of opening the door, but I prevented him,

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observing that the emperor would call for assistance if he thought it necessary.

"I was standing close to the door when Napoleon opened it himself, and said quickly on perceiving me, 'Come in, Bausset, and shut the door.' I entered the room, and saw the empress lying on the carpet, and uttering the most lamentable cries and complaints. 'No! no! I can never survive it,' exclaimed the unfortunate princess. Napoleon said to me, 'Bausset, are you strong enough to carry Josephine down the private staircase to her own apartment?' I immediately obeyed, and, with the assistance of Napoleon, raised the empress, who seemed to be labouring under a nervous attack. He then took a light from the table, and opened a door, which led through an obscure passage to the staircase he had mentioned. When we had come to the first step of the staircase, I observed to Napoleon that it was too narrow for us to descend without falling: he immediately called the keeper of his port folio, who was stationed, night and day, at a door of the cabinet opening upon the landing. Napoleon gave him the torch, which was now of no use in the lighted passage, and ordered him to go before. He then took hold of Josephine's feet himself, to enable me to descend with more ease. Once my sword embarrassed me, and I thought we

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should certainly fall; but happily no accident occurred, and we deposited our precious burthen on an ottoman in her bed chamber.

The emperor immediately ran to the bell-pull, and rang for the women of the empress. She had ceased to moan since I had first raised her in the upper saloon, and I imagined that she had fainted, until the time of the little difficulty with my sword in the middle of the stairs. As we had no time for arranging our positions, I was obliged to tighten my grasp in order to avoid a fall which might have been fatal to all of us. My arms were round her waist—her back supported by my breast—and her head lying on my right shoulder. When she perceived my endeavours to keep from falling, she whispered, 'You press me too hard.' From that moment I felt no apprehensions about her health, and it was evident that she had never lost her recollection for an instant.

"During this whole transaction I was too busy with Josephine to observe Napoleon; but when the attendants came in, I followed him into a small antechamber adjoining the bed room. His agitation and uneasiness were excessive. His grief, indeed, disturbed him so much, that he informed me of the cause of all that had passed, in these words. 'The interests of France and of my dynasty do violence to my

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heart . . . . . Divorce has become a rigorous duty . . . . I am the more afflicted at this scene with Josephine, because she must have heard every thing from Hortense three days ago . . . . I deplore with my whole heart the necessity which condemns me to a separation . . . . . I thought she had more firmness, and was by no means prepared for such a paroxysm of grief.' His emotion compelled him to utter these sentences at long intervals; the words were pronounced with difficulty and almost without connection. His voice was faltering and oppressed, and his eyes filled with tears. He must have lost all self-command, or he would never have entered into such details to one so far removed from his councils and his confidence as myself. The whole scene did not last more than seven or eight minutes.

"Napoleon immediately sent for Corvisart, Queen Hortense, Cambacérès and Fouché; but before returning to his own apartment, he made personal enquiries after Josephine, who was calmer and more resigned."

It was easy indeed for him to feel resigned to the blow about to be inflicted upon his best friend, and most faithful companion; and it was equally unreasonable to charge her with weakness, because a complaint escaped her at the fatal crisis. He might have learned from his

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own experience, that keenness of feeling is the first emotion of surprised pride. His own disorder—the few words of apology stammered out to an inferior attendant—the tears he was unable to restrain—were at least as much astonishing, as that Josephine should exhibit in her grief the weakness of a woman, rather than the dignity of a sovereign. It is true that the unhappy empress had been already led to expect this afflicting communication; but the instructions of Napoleon, given as well to prevent his own embarrassment, as out of consideration for Josephine, had been but imperfectly fulfilled. Hortense was selected as the natural mediatrix, because, as she was endeared by the closest ties of blood, she could best employ the affectionate stratagems and soothing address, so necessary to prepare her mother for her calamity. But the same feelings prevented her complete co-operation; for in the proposed measure, she could see neither propriety nor necessity, while her filial affection and queenly pride pointed out all its injustice and caprice. The confidence of the emperor was to her a misfortune; and her heart would have broken had it been required that she should declare the imperial will abruptly to her mother. A few distant allusions and equivocal expressions, which were all she could bring herself to utter, fulfilled the strict

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commands of duty; after these, it was but just that the first cause of all the evil should bear the punishment of announcing its approach, and sustaining the first burst of sorrow or anger produced by the intelligence.

The liveliness of Josephine's grief was displayed in all her sentiments and expressions. The invincible goodness of her heart recalled the many ties that united her to the emperor, at the very moment when they were about to be eternally severed. Her least regret was for her throne: it was the loss of her husband, so warmly admired and so truly loved—that excited the keenest and most enduring affliction. Not content, however, with practising herself the duties of gratitude and submission, she enjoined and enforced them upon her children. Young, and strongly attached to their mother, they felt themselves injured by the blow directed against her rights. This exalted filial piety, justified by natural affection, was pardonable even in the eyes of reason and policy.

Josephine was the true and only link of connection between Napoleon and her children: after her divorce, their natural relation towards him was inferior to that of collateral relatives. The crown of Italy, which had been promised to Eugene, was lost beyond all hope, when the emperor could look forward to heirs of his own

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blood. The situation of Hortense was in no wise more favourable. Her condition as the wife of Napoleon's brother seemed a feeble bond of union, when that brother already tottered on his throne, and when every day increased his estrangement from his consort. It was therefore excusable in the brother and sister, if they wished to resign the grandeur already half lost by the divorce of their mother, and to become the companions of her retirement, and the sharers of her obscurity. Josephine moderated these transports of feeling; she excused the conduct of Napoleon, reminded them of their obligations to his favour, and commanded implicit obedience to the will of him, who was to them a father and a sovereign. Their sacrifice was in the highest degree meritorious. What could be more painful, after they had left their weeping mother, than to mingle in all the pomp of a second marriage—to see a haughty stranger seated on the throne of Josephine—to gaze upon the throng of servile courtiers crowding around this new object of adulation—and to acknowledge a mistress, when they had forgotten their condition as subjects, in the honoured title of children of the empress?

In every ceremony requiring his presence, Eugene was distinguished for his dignified behaviour. His countenance, usually mild and

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smiling, had become grave and serious, strongly expressive of internal distress, restrained by pride, honour, and the obligations of the occasion. He was a *man:* but the feminine weakness of his sister was unequal to a similar exertion. Four queens bore the imperial train of Maria Louisa, as she approached the nuptial altar: Hortense, one of the four, wept bitterly as she followed the new bride of Napoleon, and when the fatal *yes* was pronounced that separated him for ever from her mother, she uttered a loud shriek, and became insensible. When this tribute to nature and her sex had been thus paid, she recovered all her native strength of character, and the lofty bearing befitting her rank.

Josephine practised in its fullest extent the generous moderation she inculcated on her children. It was in her power to have interposed serious obstacles in the way of Napoleon's marriage, by means of the religious scruples of Maria Louisa, who, from her education in a bigoted court, evinced a strong repugnance to become the wife of one whose former union was still unbroken in its sacramental obligation. The new bride had received assurances that Napoleon's first marriage was a mere civil ceremony; but she refused to trust any other authority than that of Josephine herself. The

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Duke of Rovigo has stated in his memoirs, that Napoleon had never espoused Josephine in church: in this assertion he has only repeated the rumour which he and many others had most probably been ordered to spread at the time of the divorce, but it is not, on that account, the less untrue. Every religious rite had been fulfilled, and strange as it may appear, twice instead of once. The first time the ceremony was performed by a parish priest: aftewards, a few days before the coronation, in consequence of some informalities discovered by the cardinal delegated by the pope, the nuptial benediction was repeated by himself in the chapel of the Tuileries: Duroc and Eugene were two of the witnesses present. The cardinal subsequently, at the request of Josephine, signed a certificate, declaring the reality and validity of her religious marriage: but no use was made of this powerful weapon. The will of a husband who deserted her, was respected, and an equivocal reply, involving no direct violation of the truth, quieted all the scruples of Maria Louisa. She was requested to refer to the Moniteur; when Josephine well knew that Napoleon had thought it inexpedient to publish in that journal, his deference for the wishes of the pope and the cardinal.

In separating for ever from her consort, Jo-

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sephine sought the sad satisfaction of writing her farewell, and of giving him for the last time those counsels which he had always followed with advantage. From such a letter it was impossible to exclude every expression of conjugal and maternal grief; but it is to the foresight, rather than to the sorrow of Josephine, that we must ascribe the prophetic foreboding of evil, so soon to be realised. We here insert this interesting document.

"My forebodings are realised! you have pronounced the word which separates us for ever; the rest is nothing more than mere formality. This, then, is the consummation, I will not say of all my sacrifices,—they cost me nothing since they were made for you,—but of my unbounded attachment, and of your own most solemn obligations. If the policy which you allege as a reason should prove successful, I should not complain; but policy is a mere pretext. It is to your mistaken ambition that I am sacriced—to that ambition which has guided your whole career, which has led you to conquest, elevated you to empire, and now hurries you onward to disaster and defeat.

"You speak of mighty alliances, of giving an heir to the empire, of founding a new dynasty; but with whom is this alliance to be formed? With the deceitful house of Austria, the sworn

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enemy of France; a family which detests us from feeling, from system, and from necessity. Do you believe that this hatred, so often displayed within the last half century, has not been transferred from the Bourbons to the empire? Or do you suppose that the children of the able Maria Theresa, who purchased from Madame de Pompadour the fatal treaty of 1756, which you cannot even mention without a shudder—do you suppose that her posterity have not inherited her spirit as well as her dominion? I only repeat what you have told me a hundred times, when your ambition was satisfied with humiliating a power which it now seeks to restore. Believe me, as long as you are master of Europe, you will find her your slave; but beware of a reverse!

"You wish, however, an heir. Even though as a mother I should appear partial in speaking of a son who is all my delight and used to be your hope—can I, or ought I to be silent? The adoption of the 12th of January, 1806, was then another political falsehood; but there is no deception in the virtues and talents of my Eugene. How often have you yourself praised them! Praised them! you have endeavoured to recompense them with a throne, while you confessed that the reward was inferior to his merits. All France has re-echoed these sentiments, but what

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are the wishes of France? I do not speak of my successor, and you can hardly expect it, when all I could say of her would appear suspicious. There can be no suspicion as to my prayer for your happiness, which alone can now console me. Ah! how great will that happiness be, if it equals my sorrow."

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CHAPTER X.

Louis endeavours to obtain a divorce—Arrival of Hortense at Amsterdam—Fresh dissensions—She returns to Paris—Napoleon censures her conduct.

The king of Holland entertained a sincere friendship for Josephine, and was deeply grieved at the divorce, yet he was very near following the example of Napoleon. The time had not come, when he could venture to solicit openly for a dissolution of his marriage, but he wished to add the sanction of the law to the actual separation existing between himself and his queen. The health of both parties was, in point of fact, much impaired; the true motive, however, was to be sought in their discordant tempers. During the whole period of his late residence in Paris, Louis had never seen the queen, except on those public occasions when a meeting was rendered unavoidable by the rules of etiquette. On his arrival from Holland, he had repaired immediately to his mother's residence, instead

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of proceeding to his own palace, which was occupied by Hortense. After all this coldness, he expressed a desire for her return to Amsterdam; and she conceived herself obliged by duty to comply with all his wishes. He was unfortunate; his kingdom was menaced by the imperial armies; and the winning manners, amiability, and address of the queen, might prove extremely useful in encouraging his dispirited subjects, and in preserving to the last moment their wavering allegiance.

The experience of a few weeks satisfied Hortense that she had flattered herself with a vain illusion. In private, the behaviour of the king had undergone uo change, and he soon found the public observance of appearances, an intolerable constraint. Indifference, discord, and misunderstanding, became too apparent, and alike annoyed and afflicted the people and the courtiers, the French and the Dutch. Hortense was soon convinced that her presence could be more useful to her mother than to her husband. Under pretext of ill health, she removed for a few days to the royal castle of Loo; and thence, without the least intimation to the king, she set out for France.

It was said that Louis was somewhat piqued, when he heard of this departure, either on account of the contempt displayed for his autho-

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rity, or because he really entertained the plan, asserted by some, of compelling the queen to reside in his dominions. This latter supposition is highly improbable. The justice and humanity of Louis, himself so severe a sufferer by state policy, could scarcely have inflicted the same wrongs upon a neglected wife. Still, however, the best and most reasonable are often inconsistent: and we are seldom governed ourselves by the same rigid morality which influences our judgment of the conduct of others. A rigid supporter of political necessity, Napoleon himself has censured the behaviour of Hortense, and her little inclination to remain with her husband. In the memorial of St. Helena it is said that "Josephine constantly professed submission, devotion, and the most unbounded complaisance. She frequently blamed and reproved her daughter Hortense and her niece Stephanie, who lived on bad terms with their husbands, exhibited caprice, and affected a sort of independence." In another place he says, "Hortense, with all her goodness and generosity, was not without fault in her behaviour to her husband; this I must admit, notwithstanding the affection I bear her, and the real attachment which I know she feels for me. However eccentric and disagreeable Louis may have been, he undoubtedly loved her; and every woman,

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under such circumstances, and with equally important calls, ought to know how to restrain her feelings, and even to love in return. Had she possessed this self-command, the vexation of her late lawsuit would have been spared, and her life rendered happier. If she had accompanied Louis to Holland, he would never have quitted Amsterdam, nor should I have been compelled to take possession of his kingdom, a measure which contributed greatly to ruin me in Europe, and thus many events might have a different turn."

Napoleon must have been strangely disposed to ascribe great results to trifling causes, if he really imagined the union of Holland and France to have been the consequence, either of the discord of Louis and his consort, or of the indifference of Hortense for her husband. If this was his true belief, why had he not commanded them to sacrifice their mutual dislike? His will had certainly worked greater miracles than this. The truth is, that the emperor never occupied himself seriously with these family dissensions; and all three perfectly understood their relative positions. Louis had adopted the only reasonable line of policy; his wife admired his conduct, even while lamenting the inevitable rupture with Napoleon, and had she idolised her husband she could never have advised him to

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other measures. The policy of the emperor was wholly independent of mere domestic relations. In giving up to the bent, or perhaps to the caprice of their dispositions, Louis and Hortense endangered nothing but their individual happiness; all the rest depended on the destiny, or rather on the ambition of Napoleon. It was no doubt through a singular modesty that he preferred seeking in others, those causes of action which existed only in himself. With Louis, the great misfortune was not so much the alleged indifference of his consort, as his own inability to stand in comparison with the lofty genius of his brother. That same genius which conquers kingdoms, subjects nations, creates monarchies, and legislates for an empire, possesses in every thing a supernatural energy. It rules the hearts of women, as despotically as the reason and courage of men. To his family the emperor was fond—affectionate; had he been savage and brutal, still Josephine would have ever shone mildness, submission, and love. Fortune had dealt hardly by Louis: his character was unamiable, and he wanted the commanding mind of Napoleon. But, alas! genius is often a fatality.

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CHAPTER XI.

Court of Josephine—Journey of Hortense to Aix in Savoy—Fearful death of Madame de Broc—Hortense's charity.

Josephine retained, after her divorce, the title of empress, with a fortune and household befitting her dignity. Her retirement still bore the appearance of a court; differing only in the less strict observance of etiquette, and in the diminished attendance of courtiers, but atoning in freedom from restraint and in general kindness, for the want of magnificence and ceremony. The pleasures of a circle of intimate friends are certainly the best consolations for the loss of power; and Josephine having full liberty to travel, enjoyed the additional advantage of carrying all her society along with her. On these expeditions, liberty increased in direct proportion to the distance from the capital. She chiefly resided at her country seats, Malmaison and Navarre, though sometimes more distant journeys were undertaken. On one occasion she even

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went as far as Geneva, where the viceroy of Italy and his queen came from Milan to visit her. Hortense, who was always with her mother, made one of the party on this occasion. She wished, while in the vicinity of Savoy, to drink the celebrated waters of Aix, which had been recommended for the restoration of her health, then very precarious, and attended with a kind of morbid melancholy.

Her faithful friend, Madame de Broc, followed her to Aix. They frequently amused themselves with long walks in this picturesque and extraordinary region, where every excursion, every fresh step, seemed to unfold additional objects of admiration. The wonders of nature are always enhanced by sentiment, and we discover new beauties in a magnificent prospect, when we view it in the company of those whom we love. Hortense felt this pleasure the more keenly, as landscape painting was one of the branches of art in which she particularly excelled.

The two friends, one day, attempted the ascent of a mountain which promised to afford a magnificent and unbounded prospect. To reach the summit, it was necessary to cross a deep ravine, apparently torn open by some terrible convulsion. The darkness of the abyss was rather increased than concealed by the alpine firs scat-

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tered along its sides; while below, a rapid torrent rolled noisily along. The gloomy sublimity of the whole scene struck the vivid imagination of Hortense, and she remained for a moment in silent admiration. Her deep feelings were too soon to be wounded by a more real horror.

Their guides had hastily laid a narrow plank across the chasm as a bridge. Hortense, who first made the attempt, crossed with a firm, light step, and in perfect safety. Madame de Broc ventured in her turn. A sudden crash is heard, followed by a piercing shriek—Hortense turns and rushes to the brink, the plank had given way, and she sees the body of her unhappy friend, shooting from rock to rock, and overwhelmed at last in the waters of the torrent. There were no ropes at hand, and no ladder could have been long enough to reach the foot of the precipice. The guides never doubted her fate for an instant; death was inevitable, and it was scarcely even to be hoped that the mutilated corpse might be carried far into the valley, and deposited where the care of friends could recover it for the last sad funeral rites. Overwhelmed with grief, Hortense lost every thought of her own escape from a similar fate in traversing the same frail plank. Her situation was really alarming, and the guides were obliged to lay hastily a stronger bridge and to cross to her assistance. Her oldest

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friend, she who had shared every wish and soothed all her sorrows, was thus torn from her by a sudden and fearful death. It was the most terrible shock sustained by Hortense, since the loss of her eldest son. When time and care had in some degree restored her to her health, she sought to divert her grief by her customary occupations of beneficence. She founded a hospital at Aix, and devoted a great portion of each day to the distribution of money and medicine to its sick or indigent inmates; accompanying her gifts with those kind expressions, which render charity yet more welcome and more efficacious.

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CHAPTER XII.

Hortense at Malmaison—French reverses—First abdication of Napoleon—Hortense goes to Maria Louisa at Rambouillet—She returns to her mother.

At length the hurricane which had been so long and so ominously gathering, burst in its full fury upon France. Every day announced to Napoleon the defection of an ancient ally, and every day the ranks of his enemies were swelled by the diminution of his own forces. The utmost prodigies of valour were unable to save his country from invasion, and the capital itself was threatened by the hostile armies.

Hortense who had promptly returned to her mother at Navarre, read with painful anxiety the bulletins of the French army, and listened eagerly to the reports of the expresses. The unhappy Josephine, more attached to her husband now that fortune was false, shed bitter tears over the sad fulfilment of her predictions. At length she

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received despatches from a sovereign, who had once courted the friendship of Napoleon, and had deemed himself honoured when treated as his equal. Times had indeed altered: we characterise the change almost in a word, when we add that the wife and daughter of the emperor were reduced to avail themselves of his protection as an enemy and a conqueror. Paris had capitulated; the armies of the allies were encamped in her squares, and their chiefs lodged in her palaces: while Napoleon, with his forces reduced to a handful of veterans, had abdicated the throne at Fontainebleau, and was retiring to his empire of Elba.

In the letter of Alexander, the language of a victor was studiously disguised under the forms of the most delicate courtesy. He was so anxious to see the empress Josephine and her daughter, that he entreated them to return to Malmaison, unless they preferred receiving an early visit at Navarre. As an acknowledgment of this politeness, the mother set out immediately: but Hortense had duties to perform towards Maria Louisa, whom she still regarded as her sovereign. The powerful protection tendered to her mother, removed all anxiety on that account; and it was therefore incumbent on her to calm the apprehensions and share the perils of the second consort of Napoleon. She accordingly

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repaired to Rambouillet, where Maria Louisa, guarded by the forces of the coalition, was awaiting her future lot. It was speedily determined; and when she had set out for Vienna with an Austrian escort, Hortense returned to her mother at Malmaison. Here Josephine appeared to have revived her ancient court of the Tuileries. The more intimately she became known to the allied monarchs, the more she was admired and respected; and the arrival of her daughter increased the attentions of these illustrious visiters. Grace and amiability were hereditary in this family; their triumphs were surer, milder, and more rapid than the conquests of Napoleon.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Hortense created Dutchess of St. Leu—Death of Josephine—Her character and personal appearance.

The solicitude of the allied monarchs for the future welfare of Hortense, was an immediate consequence of the interest she had inspired. "Remark," said they "with what ease an enlightened people can abandon a chief who has raised them to such a pitch of power and glory. The military alone exhibit the least regret: all the rest rejoice in the change, though it is impossible for them to foresee its results. Observe all those courtiers eagerly crowding about the restored dynasty! But yesterday, they were prodigal of the most solemn oaths of attachment to Napoleon: to-day, they pretend to have always hated and despised him, and win new titles to favour by bitter and scandalous libels against their fallen master. Believe us, princess, all the rare and noble endowments which Hea-

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ven has lavished on you, will not suffice to fix the affections of the people: a power superior to the storms of revolutions, is the only safeguard against their fickleness and inconstancy." Her august friends pressed her with these reasons to accept an independent sovereignty.

The philosophy of Hortense had been acquired in the school of misfortune, but it bore no similarity to that inculcated by those clear sighted sovereigns. The obscurity of retirement seemed to her a yet safer asylum against the revolutions of kingdoms and the caprices of the people: but she had children, born in the purple, and brought up amidst the homage and respect of the highest dignitaries of the empire. The first impressions of education exercise an unconquerable influence over all the actions of life: those to whom grandeur was a birthright, can never endure mediocrity or obscurity, unless endowed with more greatness of soul than commonly falls to the lot of mortals. Hortense, therefore, yielded to the dictates of maternal tenderness, in accepting for her children what was to her a subject of indifference; but she still displayed her moderation, in taking much less than had been originally offered. At the request of the allied sovereigns, Louis XVIII. erected St. Leu into a dutchy for her advantage, with the right of inheritance vested in her children.

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The allied monarchs were equally anxious to confer a similar favour upon Josephine. She thanked them, but constantly refused; with an indifference to power that seemed almost a presentiment of the early fate which removed her from her children and her friends. Her health had been so deeply undermined by the shock and affliction caused by the overthrow of the empire, that an indisposition, apparently trifling, became serious, and in a few days terminated in death. The spring is always damp at Paris; but Malmaison, the empress's residence, being situated on the northern face of a hill, and surrounded with woods, has more than its share of the general humidity. Josephine had been confined to her bed for several days, by an attack of sore throat. The king of Prussia paid her a visit to enquire after her health, and she imagined herself sufficiently well to rise and receive him. Alarming symptoms appeared the same evening; the next day, the best of women, the mildest of queens, and the most affectionate of mothers and wives, ceased to exist.

It was now the second of June, 1814: during four days, heaven, earth and mankind had been alike sad: for four days had elapsed since the death of Josephine had deprived humanity of its ornament and poverty of its protectress. Every road from Paris to Ruel and its environs was

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crowded with trains of mourners. The indigent were not here alone—there are other misfortunes besides poverty. Sad groups thronged all the avenues, and I could distinguish tears even in the splendid equipages which came rattling across the court yard.

From the fatal day of Josephine's death, until the second of June, the time appointed for the funeral, more than twenty thousand persons beheld her for the last time. I do not include the inquisitive stragglers, who availed themselves of this opportunity to obtain a sight of Malmaison; and who, after making a slight obeisance to the state-bed, immediately enquired the way to the great Conservatory, or went off laughing to tease the wild beasts. A far greater number came to weep over the body of the empress, and kneeling, to offer their prayers for the repose of her soul. They visited with veneration the shrubberies she had planted, the fields she had tilled, and the plants watered by her own hands: while admiring her works, they seemed to enjoy a secret pleasure, in the very increase of regret. The young girls who had repaired to the melancholy spot, wept bitterly when they remembered the happy marriages of their associates, for whom the kindness of the empress had removed the opposition of interest. Old men sighed over their lost pensions, and the little enjoyments they had

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procured: while many a mother shed tears in grateful recollection of the conscript son, restored by the bounty of Josephine, who had removed him from active service, obtained his discharge, or hired the substitute. Even strangers accosted each other to relate some trait honourable to her memory. Grief, the great peace-maker, reconciled many enemies on this solemn occasion, when every thing was forgotten but the charity of her whom all lamented. Those who spoke of her soon felt the return of mutual kindness, for how could any one refuse forgiveness, near the tomb of her who had pardoned so much? Thus her very memory was as powerful as her presence. The body of Josephine was laid out on a state-bed, surrounded with numerous tapers, in an antechamber leading into the room where she died. The antechamber was hung with black, without cyphers or escutcheons: on the right of the entrance stood an altar, surrounded with chairs and sofas. The face of the corpse was covered with a cambric handkerchief, as it lay under the charge of two officiating clergymen belonging to the neighbouring villages, together with the curate of Ruel, and four domestics.

The solemn tolling of the bells of all the neighbouring parishes summoned the faithful to pay the tribute of gratitude at the foot of the

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altar. The funeral took place at noon, with the greatest pomp, in the modest little church of the village of Ruel, belonging to the parish of Malmaison. The pall-bearers were the Grand Duke of Baden, the husband of Stephanie de Beauharnais, Josephine's niece; the Marquis de Beauharnais, brother in law to the empress, and formerly ambassador to Spain; her nephew, the Count de Tascher; and, I believe, the Count de Beauharnais, gentleman in waiting of Maria Louisa.

The funeral train left Malmaison by the iron gate, and followed the high road as far as Ruel. General Sacken, who represented the emperor of Russia, and the adjutant general of the king of Prussia, on the part of his master, walked on foot at the head of the procession, followed by a number of foreign princes, marshals of France, generals and other French officers. Then came the banners of the various trades of the parish, with twenty young girls in white, chanting psalms: while two thousand mendicants of all ages brought up the rear. The whole route was lined with Russian hussars, and the national guards.

General Sacken was the bearer of a message from his sovereign, to the relatives of the empress assembled at Malmaison, expressing his wish to devote the thirty-six hours he had yet to

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remain in Paris, exclusively to the *excellent prince Eugene* and his sister, as a testimony of deep affliction at the death of her majesty. The emperor, in fact, never quitted them until he set out for his dominions.

Upwards of four thousand inhabitants of the neighbouring districts are understood to have assembled for the purpose of paying a parting homage to the memory of a princess, who had so justly earned the title of mother of the poor and of the afflicted. Mass was celebrated by M. de Barrel, archbishop of Tours, her chief almoner, assisted by the bishops of Evereux and Versailles: after the gospel, he pronounced a short but affecting funeral oration.

The body of Josephine* was placed in a leaden coffin, enclosed in one of wood, which was temporarily deposited in that part of the cemetry containing the remains of three hundred persons crushed to death in the Rue Royale, in

* The body of Josephine now lies under a magnificent tomb of white marble, erected by her children. She is represented in her imperial robes, kneeling, and appparently praying for the welfare of France. "Eugene and Hortense to Josephine" is the only inscription. This beautiful monument stands in a side chapel and is the work of that excellent sculptor, M. Cartelier. I cannot tell whether criticism has ever discovered any fault: I have wept too often over that statue not to believe it perfect.

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returning from the exhibition of fire works, in the place Louis XV. in honour of the marriage of Louis XVI. and Maria Antoinette.

On reaching the burial ground, Hortense, who had previously remained in one of the chapels of the church of Ruel, threw herself upon her mother's grave, to which she clung as if distracted, until forcibly removed from the melancholy spot.

The ceremonies lasted until five o'clock in the evening. The whole household of the illustrious deceased were bathed in tears; many strangers who were present, and who had only become acquainted with her since the restoration, wept in common with those whom she had blessed or comforted.

I had no wish to witness this spectacle; it was melancholy, with no accompanying consolation. Whilst the general sorrow was publicly expressed, mine was indulged in a different manner. I wandered among bowers planted by the hands of Josephine herself, and through their branches I looked out upon the fields she had cultivated and the cottages she had built. Even this sad delight, and the very shade which sheltered me, were all her work. Near me on the road, and far across the fields, crowds were hurrying towards Malmaison and Ruel, whilst others were on the return. They met and exchanged a few words; the young girls shed

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tears, and then went mourning on their way. Sometimes I caught disjointed sentences borne to me by the wind: in all, the name of Josephine was pronounced by gratitude, and her charity commemorated by sorrow.

Above the confused noises which re-echoed over the plain, came the sullen tolling of the bells, and every breeze seemed charged with their endless peals. To me, the wearisome monotony of the chiming brass, which knells alike for the good and the wicked, has ever appeared ill-omened. I strove to divert my attention by listening to the twittering of the birds: their concerts were occasionally interrupted, but they recommenced their songs with more subdued notes; and there was something soothing in the sad thought, that from the very bench where I was then seated, Josephine had a thousand times enjoyed their music.

The brightness of the day was obscured by dark clouds when I arrived at the church. It was hung with mourning for its departed benefactress. When a crowned head falls at the feet of death, vanity raises the diadem to decorate a coffin: here there was no pomp, no proud epitaph, but in the midst of tears and sighs, a thousand voices repeated, and ever will repeat, the name of Josephine.

To the name of one so dear and who soothed

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so many sorrows, gratitude would willingly add two more, which a prudent sorrow, it is said, should carefully suppress. On this subject I am equally ignorant and indifferent. I can only say that grateful remembrance acknowledges no other guide than the dictates of affection, and that Eugene and Hortense are invoked alike with the cherished memory of Josephine. Can there be any so unfeeling as to imagine tears formidable, or to consider grief a crime? Sorrow never conspires.

The following portrait of Josephine is from the pen of an intimate friend. Several years before a sudden turn of the wheel of fortune had raised her to a throne, she had attained the utmost perfection of what was called her beauty: yet she was never strictly beautiful, if to entitle a woman to that distinction, regularity of feature must be added to nobleness and elegance. A countenance animated by intelligence, and especially by feeling, is far more captivating than the cold perfection and symmetry so prized by artists in the models of antiquity. To these charms Josephine had no claim; but every emotion of her mind was forcibly and rapidly depicted by the ever varying expression of her fascinating face. It was the mirror of her heart, adorned by every grace, and reflecting that general benevolence, which seeks in every suffering

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creature another subject for consolation and relief.

Her benevolence, the leading trait in her character, was in truth universal. The same hand which lavished bounties without stint and sometimes without reflection, caressed a suffering animal, or sought to revive, by cultivation, a withered and drooping plant. Her feelings of charity suffered no change from the vicissitudes of fortune, When almost indigent at Fontainebleau, a strict economy enabled her to assist others yet more destitute than herself; while as an empress and a sovereign, her benevolence became as splendid as her prosperity.

A heart so affectionate was indeed worthy of affection. When imperial France in the pride of victory beheld captive Europe at her feet, she bestowed on Napoleon the title of "great:" a medal struck to Josephine the beneficent, proclaims the milder fame of the empress. Except Stanislaus and herself, I know but few sovereigns who have been tempted to deserve a similar surname—one, indeed, not to be gained by pensions heaped upon the minions of a court, but by acts of heavenly charity, done in the cottage of the poor, and near the sick bed of the unfortunate.

Such is a brief sketch of all that will survive of Josephine—the envelope of so pure a soul

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may be described in a few words. It is pleasing to see a woman at once estimable and beautiful, and I have already said that in either point of view there was nothing wanting in Josephine. Voltaire himself, like the court poets who were the plagiarists of his panegyric, would have applied to her, as he did to the Marchioness de Vilette, the famous epithet of Fair and Good.

Her figure was of the ordinary height, but beautifully modelled. Every motion was marked by that pliant ease which was equally suited to the graceful attitude which painters love to represent in Venus, or to the dignified demeanour befitting the majesty of a queen. A constant changefulness gave to her countenance, even when agitated by sorrow, an expression ever new and always attractive. Her eyes were large, deep blue, and shaded by slightly curved eye lashes: the colour of her hair, between dark and light, harmonised exactly with the tint of her complexion. All who have heard Josephine converse, and especially those who were so fortunate as to hear her sing, must preserve a pleasing remembrance of the soft and winning tones of her voice. Without much compass, and almost without art, (although she was a good musician,) the sounds possessed that tremulous melody which chords so well with the feelings of the listener. The notes were scarcely above

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mediocrity, but the accents came from the heart and found the heart. While she was seated on the throne, her performance on the harp and piano was the theme of universal praise: it is true, however, that there are few queens, who, at least in their lives, have not enjoyed a reputation for virtue and talent. The abilities of Josephine appeared perhaps to less advantage in the empress than in Madame Bonaparte; but on the other hand, none could surpass the virtues she displayed in imperial sovereignty.

Besides these agreeable accomplishment, Josephine possessed more solid acquirements. She understood botany thoroughly; her taste for this favourite study erected the magnificent conservatories of Malmaison, which honour her memory almost as much as her pensions to the indigent. When her divorce had dispelled the magic dream of power, and an abdication had exhibited the vanity of greatness, she found consolation in the sight of her beautiful exotics, warmed even in exile by their native sun. The imperial purple was replaced by a plain dress of muslin; while the brow which once had glittered with royal jewels was still crowned, but it was now with a simple diadem of roses and violets.

At the first intelligence of his mother's illness, Eugene set out instantly from Munich, where he had been welcomed by his father in law, the king

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of Bavaria: but he arrived only in time to pay her the last honours, and to weep with Hortense over her tomb. We shall not attempt to describe their affliction. As a mother, no one was ever more affectionate than Josephine, or more deserving of love; as children, Hortense and Eugene were every way worthy of their parent, and none could feel more deeply a similar calamity.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Interview of Hortense with Louis XVIII.—Unjust murmurs of the Bonapartists—Louis Bonaparte demands the custody of his eldest son.

As etiquette required the son in law of a reigning monarch to wait on the king of France in passing through Paris, Eugene paid a visit to Louis XVIII., after the expiration of the time prescribed for the observances of grief. He was unwilling on this occasion, either to style himself a German prince, or to assume any title recalling the days of the empire: with characteristic modesty and true French feeling he was therefore simply announced as General Beauharnais. He expressed his thanks to the king for the kind treatment extended to his mother by the allied monarchs, and for the favours they had conferred upon his sister.

Hortense was under a still greater obligation of gratitude towards Louis, and she consequently paid her respects to him on quitting her mourn-

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ing. Both parties to this interview enjoyed a great reputation for conversational talent, although the style of each was extremely different. The wit of the king was academic, and its far fetched refinement was constantly perceptible through the formal politeness of a court. Hortense, on the contrary, is ever frank and unaffected: her sensibility lends its hue to every thought, and her goodness of heart is expressed in every sentiment. The labour of display and the coquetry were all on the part of the king, for Hortense had only to be herself to triumph in this little contest. Louis, however, acquired some advantage, from his loud commendation of the merit of the princess with whom he had thus become acquainted. In a Bourbon, this praise of a member of the imperial family was almost magnanimity; but while full justice was rendered him for the feeling, the courtiers and Parisians took care to add that he had turned a rank Bonapartist.

The discontent of the partisans of Napoleon at the conduct of Hortense, though more suppressed, was much more enduring. They admitted no excuse for her visit to the king, for they could never forgive its reason. The article in the treaty of Fontainebleau erecting the Dutchy of St. Leu was to them conclusive proof that the daughter of Napoleon wished to sepa-

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rate herself from the cause and even from the remembrance of her father: they would never listen to the real motives we have already explained. Party spirit is strangely inconsistent: its approbation or its silence must be purchased by sacrifices, and yet these are only rewarded with obscurity and contempt.

Louis Napoleon was by no means the last to attack the conduct of Hortense: perhaps, indeed, he was only taking advantage of her present unpopularity, to realise a scheme projected long before. A formal separation from bed and board already existed: he now claimed the possession of his eldest son—a claim of course refused by Hortense. The affair was referred to a legal tribunal, where it was still pending, when the news reached Paris of the landing of Napoleon at Cannes. We may easily imagine that under such circumstances, all farther proceedings were suspended. The great arbiter soon arrived in his capital.

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CHAPTER XV.

Napoleon returns from Elba—He refuses to see Hortense—Her justification—Louis Bonaparte demands a divorce—Napoleon's refusal—Successful interposition of Hortense in behalf of the Dutchess of Orleans to reside in Paris.

Napoleon, hailed every where by the people, and by the very troops despatched to oppose him, had reconquered France in traversing it: on the 20th March, 1815, without striking a blow he took possession of the Tuileries. Hortense immediately requested an interview; moved by affection for her adopted father, and anxiety to dispel the prejudices raised against her in his mind. The emperor at first refused to see her, but she persisted in her demand, feeling that every embarrassment would be well compensated by an interview with a beloved relative. Napoleon at length received her; but it was with that stern look, severe eye, and frowning brow—with that aspect of Jupiter Tonans—

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which inspired more terror than even the reproaches pronounced by his lips. Strong in conscious innocence, the queen listened without impatience, and vindicated herself without difficulty. Napoleon at length became convinced that there was no treachery in submission to events which could be neither foreseen nor controlled—no defection in natural anxiety for the welfare of her children, and in a residence in France when assured of a harsh reception every where else. He admitted that to return civility for kindness was not a fault—that there was no crime in showing gratitude to sovereigns who had given protection, when they might have exercised injustice and tyranny without a possibility of resistance or escape. In political revolutions, the obligations of a mother and a woman are far different from those of a man. The firmness of the latter, supported by native energy of mind and body, is recompensed by glory; while none but milder duties remain to the humble and modest female.

Louis Napoleon abstained from a personal appearance as the adversary of his consort; contenting himself with despatching an envoy from Rome with full powers. His deep anxiety was declared for a complete reconciliation with his brother, whom he had never seen since the abdication of the crown of Holland; but the con-

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dition was annexed that a divorce from his wife should be permitted. As divorces had been formally abolished in 1814, the tribunal having cognisance of the suit for the possession of his eldest son, could entertain no proceedings of that nature; he believed this, however, an excellent opportunity for the complete execution of his favourite project. The emperor received the individual charged with this mission, in a manner worthy of himself. "Let Louis," said he, "come when he will: he shall be well received, for he is my brother. As for his divorce, it is a mere whim, which I could not indulge even if our family contract was not diametrically opposed to it." Louis remained at Rome.

As soon as Hortense had regained the esteem and affections of her father, she renewed her ancient habits of benevolence under the sanction of imperial authority. The Dutchess of Orleans, a princess of the blood-royal, had broken a limb in attempting a precipitate flight from Paris on the arrival of the emperor. The solicitations of Hortense procured a permission for her residence in the capital, with a pension suitable to the high station she had lost; and under the same auspices, a like favour was accorded to her daughter the Dutchess of Bourbon. She interceded much longer, though with unequal success, for a less illustrious personage, the Baron

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de Vitrolles. His only crime was that of an ardent devotion to an unfortunate family; and the emperor could now, better than any one else, appreciate the merit of such an attachment; but he knew also that the baron had other claims to the gratitude of the Bourbons, and he was deaf to all the entreaties of Hortense.

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CHAPTER XVI.

March of the allies against Napoleon—Battle of Waterloo—The second abdication of the Emperor—Hortense shares his captivity at Malmaison.

The news of the return of Napoleon startled the congress assembled at Vienna to partition his empire. A strong protest, issued against his fresh occupation of the throne, was followed by the immediate march of the armies of the allies. The troops of Prussia and the English forces occupying Belgium, from their proximity to France, naturally formed the vanguard of the coalition. Napoleon hastily assembled an army, which was less formidable from its numbers than from the ability and fame of the leader. By rapid marches, the junction of the Prussians and English was anticipated, and victory smiled for an instant before departing for ever. The fatal rout of Waterloo then hurried along Napoleon and the wrecks of his guard, involving infantry, cavalry, artillery, and baggage, in one mass of

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hopeless confusion. Many officers and soldiers perished by their own hands, rather than survive so fearful a disaster. Great numbers of the wounded were preserved from Prussian barbarity by the humanity and friendship of the Belgians. The despair of the survivors who followed the retreat of Napoleon towards Paris, can only be compared to the glory they had won from the commencement of the battle until the close of the day. They resembled a funeral procession, as they stole silently from that bloody field which had twice resounded with their shouts of victory. Every French soldier seemed a hero weeping over his country and her triumphs. The staff reached Jemappes, where a vain attempt was made to rally the means of defence. The very carriage of Napoleon had been lost, and a small wagon bore the victim of Waterloo to Philippeville, where he found the equipage of Marshal Soult. He entered a caleche with General Bertrand, who was destined never to leave him, until he had closed his eyes at the distance of three thousand miles from France.

The allies had gained a great battle; but this first tremendous disaster might yet have been repaired, had Napoleon found followers at Paris sincerely disposed to second his exertions. Fouche, however, whom he had imprudently created a minister, busily excited the partisans

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of the Bourbons: while on the other hand the representative chamber, jealous of the emperor's authority, thwarted all his measures, assumed the supreme control, and engaged in interminable debates while the enemy were at the very gates of the capital. The republican opposition was strengthened by a great body of royalists, who were not long in throwing off the mask. Napoleon was forced to a second abdication far more painful than the first; for it was now his own subjects who hurled him from the throne, and threatened his very existence. A rapid succession of political concussions had awakened all those evil passions, which in times of anarchy always rage without restraint.

The emperor, after laying down his authority, retired to Malmaison. The provisional government, to whom he was yet formidable, converted his asylum into a prison, and appointed a jailer in the person of General Beker, an officer who owed his rank to Napoleon, and discharged the painful duties imposed on him with all possible respect for his former master. He was consoled by the reflection, that in fulfilling the instructions of the provisional government, he in reality protected the emperor from attempts upon his life. There was now this singular difference between Malmaison and other prisons, that it was more difficult to enter than to leave it.

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The gates opened, however, to admit Hortense, or rather she arrived at the same time with the illustrious captive. If Napoleon had not already appreciated her unbounded kindness and affection, he had here abundant proof of their existence and sincerity. Could any thing have enabled him to forget the extent of his misfortunes, or have interrupted the sad current of reflection on his own probable fate, and the future destinies of France, it must have been the presence of this angelic woman. Her ingenuity was unceasingly employed in devising new amusements to divert his mind; her compassion found tears for irremediable evils; her sympathy shared the weight of affliction; while her enthusiasm roused his genius, by pointing to the glorious perspective, when his exploits would be recorded in the brightest pages of history for the admiration of all posterity.

Hortense would certainly have been excusable if she had directed a portion of this admiration to herself: she might justly have been proud of the unbounded self-devotion exhibited in defiance of the enemies of her family, who were sure to seek every where new food for their unmanly calumnies. The infamous libels in which these slanders were circulated, had been published after the first restoration, and must have been known to Hortense. She probably considered

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them unworthy of notice, for she was ever faithful to the motto of the arms of Holland,—"Do right, come what may."

The moment of lasting separation at length arrived. Forced to abandon France, Napoleon set out from Malmaison for Rochefort, in order to embark upon that ocean which was to bear him he knew not whither. Neither Hortense nor himself could possibly conjecture his destiny; and this uncertainty alone was sufficient to render their parting deeply afflicting: how much more painful would it have been, could the queen have pictured to herself her father falling into the hands of his enemies, and perishing by a lingering martyrdom of five years, in a dreadful climate, on a little rock lost in the midst of the African ocean.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Hortense persecuted by the French government—She is ordered to leave France—Is protected by Prince Schwartzenberg at Dijon—Vexations at Geneva.

The second restoration took place. The government filled with old rancour and new exasperation, announced openly a bloody retribution; while its gloomy distrust seemed to increase with the severity of its measures. Hortense was included in the circle of suspicion: she was accused of planning and directing all the Bonapartist contrivances, though they really originated in the department of police. The administration—hypocritical in its justice and cowardly in its cruelty—got up daily some new conspiracy, as a pretext for oppression, and in order to involve the secret friends of the imperial sway. Injustice and suspicion are the proper attributes of weak and short sighted rulers. Napoleon landed at Cannes—Hortense could alone have planned his return: he had traversed France, hurrying the whole nation in his train—Hortense

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must have poured out the treasures of corruption: his concealed partisans were now promoting every where rebellious disturbances—it was still the mysterious power of Hortense that encouraged and directed sedition. The same absurdity marked the behaviour of the congress of Vienna towards Eugene, a prince eminently distinguished for his frank and honourable conduct. The return of Napoleon and his successes in France, were due neither to the machinations of a prince without power, nor to the weak intrigues of a woman: instead of ascribing the origin of those great events to such remote and inadequate causes, we must look for it in the shameful conduct of the congress itself towards the people of every nation, and in the counter revolutionary spirit of the Bourbons and their ministers.

Hortense, now an object of suspicion, received orders to quit France without delay, and she accordingly set out, with her children, from Malmaison, on the 17th of July, 1815. Her travelling companion was Prince Schwartzenberg, whose situation was soon converted into that of a protector. When the party arrived at Dijon, they found the municipal authorities resolved to detain the princess as a prisoner. This act was certainly an apparent disobedience to their superiors at Paris, who had granted her a pass-

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port, but perhaps they were more complaisant in reality than in seeming. In those days of dark machinations, the higher powers frequently entrusted their subalterns with the execution of odious measures, which, officially at least, they affected to disavow. Fortunately for Hortense, this part of Burgundy was occupied by Austrian troops. Prince Schwartzenberg immediately introduced himself to the city authorities, and demanded whether he must appeal to his soldiers for leave to proceed without interruption. Such arguments are irresistible, and the travellers reached Geneva without further accident.

The dominion of France was here at an end, but the troubles of Hortense seemed only to recommence. Imprisonment was no longer a subject of apprehension, but the magistracy would suffer neither a residence in the city, nor a prosecution of her journey. It was clear that they wished her to return homeward, where open persecution was likely to be her lot. The Genevese, quite as scrupulous as the French ministry, had no objections to see these vexations inflicted by others, which they were too timid to take upon themselves.

Were such sentiments worthy of proud republicanism? The union of Geneva to France was their heavy subject of complaint against the emperor; but they had received the richest

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compensation. Their country had prospered beyond example: the reputation of her literati was extended by their admission into the institute of Paris: the youth of the canton had gained decorations and glory on the field of victory: titles of nobility had been gladly accepted by the dignitaries of the republic, and the department of the Leman—a part of the mighty empire of France—enjoyed far higher consideration than the petty state of Geneva—the most insignificant of sovereignties, except its sister commonwealth of San Marino.

If we concede the utmost extent of the alleged injury, it was still wrong to avenge the faults of Napoleon upon an innocent member of his family; and above all, they should never have selected as their victim, a female whose whole life was a continued stream of benevolence, fertilising all that approached her. It was the same enchanting excellence of character, that now again extricated her from the danger by which she was menaced.

The malice of the authorities of Geneva was exhibited rather in negotiations than in deeds. It was impossible to converse with Hortense for any length of time, without a feeling of devotion to her service; and a short interview converted the most violent of the magistrates into penitent partisans. They assumed the re-

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sponsibility of authorising the continuance of her journey to Savoy, and afterwards excused this act of simple justice by specious pretexts of negligence or ignorance.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Hortense arrives at Aix in Savoy—She is obliged to give up her eldest son to Louis Bonaparte—She returns to Geneva—New persecutions and noble behaviour of Hortense.

Hortense at length reached Aix in Savoy, where a friendly reception was extended to her —the first since her departure from Paris. The inhabitants remembered her long stay among them—her liberal charities—and the hospital she had founded and so munificently endowed. If in the course of her travels she had hitherto met nothing but persecution and enmity, here at least were those who had no other sentiments than peaceful kindness and unaffected gratitude. In treating her with all the respect due to her rank and misfortunes, the magistrates nobly expressed the feelings of the inhabitants. She was invited to remain at Aix, until the allied powers had designated her future residence.

But it was decreed that henceforth her repose

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should be constantly disturbed. The calm and pleasing aspect of Savoy was suddenly overshadowed by the same melancholy gloom which had passed before her eyes after the tragical end of her dearest friend; and the remembrance of that terrible calamity was revived by another misfortune, scarcely less afflicting, and wholly unexpected. The suit of Louis Napoleon for the custody of his eldest child, which had been interrupted by the "hundred days," was afterwards resumed and carried to a judgment in his favour. An agent arrived at Aix, furnished with competent legal powers, and the queen was obliged to submit to this cruel decree of separation.

The soul of Hortense had been already steeped in misfortune, but her power of endurance seemed at length exhausted. When she had embraced her son for the last time, and beheld the carriage depart that bore him away, a deep despondency overwhelmed her spirits. Her very existence became a dream, and it seemed indifferent to her whether her lot was to enjoy or to suffer—to depart or to be allowed to remain—to be persecuted, respected, or forgotten. She scarcely noticed the reply of the allied sovereigns, allowing her to reside at Constance; and gave no orders whatever for her journey. Her attendants were compelled to

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repeat frequently in her presence, the hints of the Savoyard authorities, who were exposed to the ill will of their government by her prolonged residence. Then, indeed, the fear of injuring those from whom she had experienced nothing but kindness, awakened her from her melancholy lethargy.

She traversed Switzerland at the very season when nature assumes her most picturesque aspect; sublime views or smiling landscapes were constantly presented; but she gazed on them as if her eyes were not those of an artist, and her hands had forgotten their skill in sketching. Her imagination itself seemed torpid, for it rose to no enthusiasm before the green valley, the magnificent cascades, or even the snowy domes of Mont Blanc. Nothing could rouse her from this fatal lethargy but the approach of danger, and such an excitement was not long wanting.

Being again obliged to pass through the territory of Geneva, she now met with far less courtesy from the country people, than formerly from the citizens themselves. She had halted for a short time at a country seat, formerly her mother's, and of course now her own. Yet the sanctity of a private dwelling was disregarded, and the house surrounded by a party of soldiers. These violent measures evidently proceeded from no pure motive, but the courage and presence

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of mind of the princess disconcerted all the plots of her enemies. She went alone into the midst of the armed warriors who crowded around her: many recognised her, for nearly all had seen service in the imperial armies. "Behold me," she exclaimed, "I am the daughter of Josephine —the child of Napoleon—of him who loved you so well and led you to glory. Is this the crime of which I am accused? I can never believe it. Return to your employers and thank them in my name; tell them of my gratitude for the pleasure of being again guarded by the soldiers of my father and of France." Every gesture, every word produced a magical effect on the hearts of the Genevese veterans. Respect, compassion, and admiration succeeded the low impulses of hate and revenge; until at length, wholly overcome, they fell on their knees and wept at the feet of her whom haply they had come to assassinate.

In travelling through the rest of Switzerland, Hortense encountered other obstacles and accidents of a less dramatic character; but she at length reached the territories of the Grand Duke of Baden, and once again the wanderer breathed freely, as she recollected the near connection between that sovereign and herself.

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CHAPTER XIX.

The Grand-Duke of Baden refuses to allow Hortense to remain in his dominions—Asylum offered by the King of Bavaria—Residence at Augsburg—Visit of the Count de la Garde.

A sentiment of politeness induced Hortense to despatch a courier to the Grand Duke, to request permission to remain in Baden: but she felt so well assured of his friendship, that a simple notice of the selection of his dutchy for her future abode seemed sufficient. What was her surprise when a chamberlain arrived with a most courteous apology from his master, who found himself, unfortunately, unable to allow the intended residence in his dominions. At this period the petty princes of Germany were as much exasperated against Napoleon as the Swiss cantons, and in the same spirit they sought to gratify their vengeance by the persecution of his family. Some also, like the French municipality of Dijon, endeavoured to win favour with their superiors by a gratuitous accumulation of vexa-

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tions; but it was still a most extraordinary exhibition of complaisance, to volunteer this inquisitorial rigour against a near connection. It is but just to remark that there were noble exceptions even among the minor sovereigns: for honourable and gallant men, however confined may be their rule, can never degrade themselves into police emissaries or subaltern tyrants.

The health of Hortense—long weak and precarious—had suffered severely during this sad pilgrimage. In these mountainous regions, winter had already commenced his reign, and the inclemency of the elements was thus added to the injustice of man. Not only was there an urgent necessity for stopping somewhere, in order to enjoy the advantages of constant and careful nursing, but her fatigue of body and mind became so extreme, that she was entirely unable to pursue her journey, The season of trial, however, was now fortunately approaching its conclusion. The king of Bavaria was informed of her critical situation, and immediately offered the wanderer an asylum in his dominions. Hortense had here the prospect of remaining unmolested for the future, with the additional pleasure of being near her brother, and of frequently enjoying his society. Augsburg was selected for her habitation, and she was residing in that

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city in 1819, when a French gentleman had the honour of an introduction. We find in his published travels in various parts of Europe, the following account of his visit.

"Returning to France in 1819, after a long residence in Russia, I stopped at Augsburg, where the Dutchess of St. Leu was then a resident. She had formerly set to music some *romances* of my composition, and I used them as a pretext for soliciting the honour of presentation. The obliging manner of her prompt answer gavs additional value to the favour it conceded.

"I had hitherto only known her by report. Some Russian officers who had accompanied the Emperor Alexander to Malmaison in 1814, had spoken to me of Hortense with so much enthusiasm, that for the first few moments, it appeared as if I saw her again after a long absence, and as if I owed my kind reception to the ties of ancient friendship. Every thing about her is in exact harmony with the angelic expression of her face, her conversation, demeanour, and the sweetness of her voice and disposition. When she speaks of an affecting incident, the language becomes more touching through the depth of her sensibility: she lends so much life to every scene, that the auditor becomes a witness of the transaction. Her powers of delight-

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ing and instructing are almost magical, and her artless fascination leaves on every heart those deep traces which even time can never efface.

"She introduced me to her private circle, which consisted of the two children and their tutors—some old officers of her household—two female friends of her infancy, and that living monument of conjugal devotion, the Count Lavallette. The conversation soon became general. They questioned me about the Ukraine, where I had long resided, and Greece and Turkey, through which I had lately travelled. In return they spoke of Bavaria, Saint-Leu, the lake of Constance, and, by degrees, of events deriving their chief interest from the important parts played by the narrators themselves. We dined at five. I afterwards accompanied the dutchess into the garden, and in the few moments then enjoyed of intimate conversation, I saw that no past praises had ever been exaggerated. How admirable were her feelings when she recalled the death of her mother, and in her tragic recital of the death of Madame de Broc! But when she spoke of her children, her brother, her friends, and the fine arts, her whole figure seemed to glow with the ardour of her imagination; while goodness of heart was displayed in every feature, and gave additional value to her other estimable qualities. In de-

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scribing her present situation, it was impossible to avoid mentioning her beloved France, the subject of her constant grief. 'You are returning,' said she, 'to your native country;' and the last word was pronounced with a heartfelt sigh. I had been an exile from my cradle, yet my own eager anxiety to revisit a birth-place scarcely remembered, enabled me to estimate her grief at the thoughts of an eternal separation. She spoke of the measures adopted for her banishment with that true resignation which mourns but never murmurs. After two hours of similar conversation, it was impossible to decide which was the most admirable—her heart, her good sense, or her imagination.

"We returned to the drawing-room at eight, where tea was served. The dutchess observed that this was a habit learned in Holland: 'though you are not to suppose,' she added with a slight blush, 'that it is preserved as a remembrance of days so brilliant, but now already so distant. Tea is the drink of cold climates, and I have scarcely changed my temperature.'

"Numerous visiters came from the neighbourhood, and some even from Munich. She may indeed regard this anxious attention with a feeling of proud gratification: it is based upon esteem alone, and, as a tribute, is far more honourable than the tiresome adulations of syco-

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phants while at St. Cloud or the Hague. In the course of the evening we looked through a suite of rooms, containing, besides a few masterpieces of the different schools, a large collection of precious curiosities. Many of these elegant trifles had once belonged to her mother, and nearly every one was associated with the remembrance of some distinguished personage or celebrated event. Indeed her museum might almost be called an abridgment of contemporary history. Music was the next amusement, and the dutchess sang, accompanying herself with the same correct taste which inspires her compositions. She had just finished the series of drawings intended to illustrate her collection of *romances:* how could I avoid praising that happy talent which thus personifies thought? The next day I received that beautiful collection as a remembrance. Time will render it more precious, though I have ventured to render it less rare.

"I took my leave at midnight, perhaps without even the hope of another meeting. I left her as the traveller parts from the flowers of the desert, to which he can never hope to return. But wherever time, accident, or destiny may place me, the remembrance of that day will remain indelibly imprinted, alike on my memory and heart. It is pleasing to pay homage to the

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fallen greatness of one like Hortense, who joins the rare gift of talents to the charms of the tenderest sensibility."

It will be remarked in this extract, that Hortense has found again many of the elements of happiness. Though not re-united to her husband, his feelings towards her have been greatly softened. He has conferred the greatest and most affecting favour that a mother can receive, by returning their eldest son. Thus the current of her life glides tranquilly along, in the midst of all that can console an exile. Her children are about her, and she is surrounded by friends to whom she is almost an object of adoration: these, as she is wont to say, are far greater blessings than the submission of subjects, and the pride of royalty.

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CHAPTER XX.

Residence of Hortense at Rome and London—Death of Eugene—Account of the mode of life of the Dutchess of St. Leu, by an English lady.

The clearing of the political horizon now enabled Hortense to visit Rome and the family of Napoleon. Augsburg is no longer her place of residence; she has selected in preference a country seat called Lindau, on the banks of the lake of Constance, which is equivalent to saying that its environs are romantic, and its prospects magnificent. It is here that she passes the summer months.

Eugene and his consort paid her frequent visits, and upon one particular occasion, their stay was unusually prolonged. The Emperor of Austria, who had contracted a third marriage with a Bavarian princess, daughter of Maximilian Joseph, came with the empress to visit his father-in-law. The ceremonial at the reception of his connections was of course regulated by German etiquette, and he hesitated in paying

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the like honours to the wife of Eugene, as to her sisters. No doubt the same inflexible forms would have denied to Maria Louisa the precedence due to her exalted rank; and she who was once the empress of the French and queen of Italy, now ranked at the Austrian court after the last of the archdutchesses. The vice-queen was no sooner informed of the scruples of Francis, than she availed herself of a very simple expedient to extricate him from embarrassment, and herself from unmerited insult. She left Munich with her husband, and resided with Hortense until the departure of the emperor.

The constant attachment of this estimable princess to her husband, was proved by the violence of her grief, when he was shortly afterwards carried off suddenly by a stroke of apoplexy. The loss of a brother, so affectionate and so fondly loved, seemed to revive in the sensitive mind of Hortense all her old misfortunes. Augsburg and Munich, where she had been accustomed to see him constantly, became insupportable, and she resolved to pass her winters elsewhere. She now visits alternately Rome and Florence, always returning in summer to the banks of her favourite lake. It was at Rome, and at her country seat of Arrenenberg, that she became acquainted with an English lady of distinguished talents, who at our request, has

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given us the following sketch of the impressions received from her visits.

"The Dutchess of St. Leu formed her principal establishment on the banks of the lake of Constance, where she was less exposed to the hateful system of espionage, and farther removed from the bustle of the great world in which she had once reigned a queen. In this delightful retreat she was accustomed to spend eight months of the year, passing the remainder of her time at Augsburg or Munich; but, since the death of her brother, the painful remembrances consequently awakened by those cities, have induced her to transfer her winter residence to Rome or Florence. The summer brings her back to Arrenenberg, and to the cheerful company of many of her dearest friends, especially the Grand Dutchess Stephanie Beauharnais, and Madame Pasquier, formerly attached to the court of Holland. The style of living of the Dutchess of St. Leu is sumptuous, without that freezing etiquette so commonly met with in the great. Her household still call her *queen*, and her son *prince*, Napoleon, or Louis; but this is a mere habit, preserved through respect, and allowed from friendship. The suite is composed of two ladies of honour, an equerry, and the tutor of her younger son. She has a numerous train of domestics; and it is among them that

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the traces are still observable of by-gone pretensions, long since abandoned by the true nobleness of their mistress. The former queen —the daughter of Napoleon—the mother of the imperial heir apparent—the relative of twenty kings—has returned quietly to private life, with the perfect grace of a voluntary sacrifice.

"The dutchess receives strangers with inexpressible kindness: ever amiable and obliging, she is endowed with that charming simplicity which inspires at first sight the confidence of intimate affection. She is a good listener, and remembers all who have ever approached her: at each successive interview you appear to have made a new advance in her regard. A pointed word shows that she has not forgotten the former conversation, and you are encouraged to continue the same subject by questions expressive of interest. She speaks freely of the brilliant days of her prosperity; and history then flows so naturally from her lips, that more may be learned as a delighted listener, than from all the false or exaggerated works so abundant every where. The dethroned queen considers past events from such an eminence, that nothing can interpose itself between her and the truth. This strict impartiality gives birth to that true greatness, which is a thousand times preferable to all the splendors she lost in the flower of her age.

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"I have been admitted to the intimacy of the Dutchess of St. Leu, both at Rome and in the country; I have seen her roused to enthusiasm by the beauties of nature, and surrounded by the pomp of ceremony; but I have never known her less than herself, nor has the interest first inspired by her character ever been diminished by an undignified sentiment, or the slightest selfish reflection.

"It is impossible to be a more ardent and tasteful admirer of the fine arts than the dutchess. Every one has heard her beautiful *romances*, which are rendered still more touching by the soft and melodious voice of the composer. She usually sings standing, and although a finished performer on the harp and piano, she prefers the accompaniment of one of her attendant ladies. Many of her leisure hours are employed in painting; miniatures, landscapes and flowers are equally the subjects of her pencil. She declaims well—is a delightful player in comedy—acts proverbs with uncommon excellence—and I really know no one who can surpass her in every kind of needle work.

"The Dutchess of St. Leu never was a regular beauty, but she is still a charming woman. She has the softest and most expressive blue eyes in the world, and her light flaxen hair contrasts beautifully with the dark colour of her long eye-

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lashes and eyebrows. Her complexion is fresh and of an even tint: her figure elegantly moulded: her hands and feet perfect. In fine, her whole appearance is captivating in the extreme. She speaks quickly, with rapid gestures; and all her movements are easy and graceful. Her style of dress is rich, though she has parted with most of her jewels and precious stones. Among the remaining ornaments, I have held in my hands the enormous chain-work, which bound the haughty standards of the Venetian republic, when they were sent by Napoleon to Paris, as a pretty present for the youthful Hortense."

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CHAPTER XXI.

[The following sketch, by a writer of eminence, presents a memorial so exact, and at the same time so graceful and touching, of the demeanour and habits maintained in privacy by the distinguished lady it seeks to portray, that its introduction here (from the New Monthly Magazine) will doubtless be welcomed by the reader. It will be found most pleasingly confirmatory of the impression which the preceding memoir is calculated to convey.]

In the early part of last summer, I chanced to find at Paris the advertisement of a Swiss retreat, which, for vagrants like myself in search of a few months' repose, struck me as being all in all. There was something picturesque even in the name of it, the Chateau de Wolfsberg; and then it was situated by the comparatively untravelled lake of Constance, and was the property of an old soldier, who had been chosen from

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his bravery to command the body guard of Napoleon, and was married to a *ci-devant dame d'honneur* of the expatriated Hortense. It was just the place, I fancied, to roll upon the grass and hear strange stories till the warm weather was over; and in a few days, therefore, I had glided through the green vineyards of France, toiled through the beautiful gloom of the Black Forest, and was standing upon the mountain top which looked down upon my journey's end. The prospect had none of the abrupt outline and surprising effect which is the general character of Switzerland. It looked like the native land of repose, and its blue undulations, intersected by the distant lake, and melting into the sunlighted snowpeaks of the Tyrol, seemed to melt into the heart likewise with a home-giving welcome. The prospect inspired no expectation which was not amply fulfilled. The chateau was not unlike one of our elegant country houses in England, and looked down upon a slope of a quarter of a mile, which varied from wood to vineyard till it stole into the calm waters, and left the eye to wander with white sails and hunt out little steeples on the opposite coast of Germany. To the right and left, it was but a moment's walk to be lost among nut-grown dells and mazy rivulets; and if you made an adventurous ride of a few hours, you might hear the

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Tyrolean song of liberty chanted above the clouds.

The lady of the house had lived all her life in courts, and her husband had never before been out of a camp; so that neither the one nor the other had been exposed to the contaminating plague of ordinary English and French society: they could think other nations nearly as good as their own, could form an opinion without adopting a prejudice, and know how to be polite and attentive without being unnatural and officious. Ramble where I may, I shall never find more interesting amusement than I did in the conversation of this well-sorted pair. The vicissitudes of their lives, keeping pace with those of their patrons, had brought them, it seemed, into contact with all the interesting people in the world, and I contrived to pick up in my idleness a fund of biographical knowledge, which it is odds if I could have collected from books by hard study. The cause for such unlikely persons for a life of seclusion being in this retired situation was a praiseworthy fidelity to Hortense, the Dutchess of St. Leu, who had a house not far distant, and their reason for establishing a home for stray travellers was that of having overlooked, in their zeal, the inconvenience of one some twenty times too big for themselves.

There were, in addition to this society, two

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or three young French women, who had been brought up in the same school with madame, and were making a temporary residence at the chateau from the same motive. I shall never forget the romantic pleasure which I used to derive from scrambling about the woods with this light-hearted company,—the mirthful screams with which they surmounted their petty perils, and the horror with which one slipt in the rivulet, or another was caught in a bramble. Then we had a stud of docile ponies, belonging to the establishment, which we used to canter to a stand-still, and then we used to finish the day by gliding over the placid lake, and singing and sentimentalising by the light of the stars.

In these little voyages we used frequently to pass beneath the calm and unpretending abode of the ex-queen of Holland. It was situated half way up a green hill, well wooded with ornamental timber, through which it afforded a partial peep, just sufficient to remind my companions of their favourite theme of conversation. The affectionate veneration with which they described their former patroness as living a life of content and simple enjoyment, under banishment from her native country, and the calumny of a world with which she had reason to be tired, inspired me with a wish to be presented to her. It was, however, rather difficult of accomplish-

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ment. There was no pride in her, it was said, beyond the dignity of a superior mind, but this had obtained such an influence over those about her, that she was no less a queen in her retirement than when she had really possessed the power. All, therefore, that my friends could promise me was, to let it drop that there was a stranger in the neighbourhood, leaving it to Hortense's knowledge of the interest attached to her to suggest the meaning of such information.

Meantime, I was taught every day something more interesting respecting her. The fortune which she had been enabled to save from the wreck of her family, was devoted mainly to the service of those of its followers who had been less successful; her house was the rendezvous of talent, whatever might be its description; and her powers of rivalling it were not inferior to her taste and generosity in its patronage.

She had staying with her at the time, besides her two *dames de compagnie*, with her younger son and his tutor, the poet Cassimer Delavigne, his brother, who is also a distinguished dramatist, and other friends whose taste lay in the same way. Among their amusements, therefore, it was determined to get up a theatre, with a variety of little Vaudeville pieces, that all in turns might have characters to their liking. One of my rambling companions, a black-eyed piece of

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witchcraft, whom Nature had made for nothing but sportive idleness, was to play a part, and consequently the affairs of the green room possessed a double interest for me. I used to walk with her through the vineyards to her rehearsals, and approach as near the house as I could, in the hope of being asked in. I could never contrive to be seen, however, and was obliged to lie down under a tree, or catch fish in the lake, till my little friend was ready to return. At last, in spite of having been described as *tres distingué*, in my own country, for something or other which could not exactly be remembered, I began to give up all hope of an introduction, when, one fine evening, as we were all distributed about the lawn in little groups, (for our party had been increased by several errant English,) there was an alarm that Hortense was coming to visit madame. As I saw her winding slowly up the hill, with all her company in three little summer carriages, the elegance of the cavalcade, in scenes where elegance was so rare, was exceedingly striking; and I could not help thinking that she meditated a call of ceremony upon the stranger part of our community. I was well pleased to find my surmise correct.

The appearance of Hortense was such as could not fail of exciting admiration and kind feeling. Her countenance was full of talent,

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blended with the mild expression of a perfect gentlewoman; and her figure, though not beyond the middle height, was of a mould altogether majestic. She lamented that she had not sooner known the purposed length of our stay in that part of Switzerland, as, having conceived that we were merely passing a few days, she had been unwilling to occupy our time; she then spoke of her regret at not being able to entertain us according to her wishes; and finally told us, that she had in agitation some little theatricals, which, if we could bear with such trifles, we should do her pleasure in attending. All this was said with a simple and winning elegance, which made one's heart ache, not so much for her banishment, as for the taste of the epicurean old gentleman who banished her. And yet, if he had really surmised that she was guilty of plotting the return of his great rival, he was not altogether without excuse. The seductions of such a traitress might possibly have unloyalised his whole court.

At last the evening of the play arrived, and I really got beyond the gate of Hortense's abode. It was a favourite bijou, upon which no taste had been spared. All that terraces and trellice work, and woodbines and exotics, could do, was seen in perfection. And then the views which were in some places afforded through the woods,

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and in others, by their rapid descent, carried over them, were broken in a manner which rendered them doubly beautiful. From one peep you caught the small vine-clad island of Reichman, with its cottage gleams trembling upon the twilighted lake. From another you had a noble reach of the Rhine, going forth from its brief resting-place to battle its way down the falls of Schaffhausen, and beyond it the eye reposed upon the tender outline of the Black Forest, melting warmly in the west. In a third direction you saw the vapoury steeples of Constance, apparently sinking in the waters, which almost surrounded them, and far away you distinguished the little coast villages, like fading constellations, glimmering fainter and fainter, till land and lake and sky were blended together in obscurity.

When I entered, I found the suite of three or four small rooms filled with company, but Hortense was engaged in her theatre. The walls of the principal apartments were ornamented with pictures, amongst which I was shown an exceedingly interesting full-length portrait of Josephine. She was a pale, graceful woman, full of melancholy expression, and reclining in a corresponding attitude upon a bank overshadowed by a sombre shrubbery. I should imagine (for I forgot to enquire) from the sadness which pervaded the picture, that it must have

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been painted after its hardly used original had ceded her honours to her husband's unfeeling views of policy, and had been taught by solitude and sorrow the true value of human greatness. The sentiment of resignation was so well expressed, so tender, and so touching, with such a delicious absence of the usual melo-dramatic style of the French school, that the sight of it was quite a lesson in philosophy. In the next room I found more pictures and a few busts, amongst the latter of which was one of Lord Byron, with whose works I afterwards found the dutchess to be perfectly familar, for, though I never heard her attempt to speak English, she was able to read it with facility. Upon a pedestal in the midst of a saloon beyond, two sides of which were open to the precipitous landscape, was Josephine again—a piece of breathing marble which seemed to advance through the dim twilight like a spirit. There was an increased interest in this duplicate of Hortense's attachment to her unfortunate mother, for it afforded an opportunity of ascertaining the strength of the resemblance in each by comparing them together. They were much alike, and both proved the original to have been an admirable subject for the artist; as good a subject, indeed, as her history, which presents situations of simple dignity, more affecting, perhaps,

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than any thing of their class in modern days. I thought of Josephine, when Napoleon placed the crown upon her head in the presence of countless myriads, who were content to be her slaves—the humility with which she is said to have knelt before him to receive her honours—the pride of heart which he confessed himself to have felt when he hailed her as an empress: then what a contrast to behold the pair in their domestic privacy; the husband confusedly seeking to unveil his purpose in words which might not wound the heart, and the meek wife fainting under the intelligence that her days were to be ended in unmerited mortification and divorce. Was it, I thought, to be attributed to an unexpressed resentment of this treatment of her mother, that the house of Hortense exhibited not a vestige of Napoleon, nor, with the exception of her children, of his race? This fact was singular, and considering her love for the fine arts, and particularly for the portraits of those whom she valued, could not have been without a reason. The one which struck me might not have been correct; but, if it was so, it was surely neither devoid of greatness nor of tenderness.

In turning my eyes from the statue, the first thing that caught them was the house of Prince Eugene, built by him at a short distance, that he

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might share the solitude of his exiled sister, but which he never lived to inhabit. Here was another powerful claim to sympathy. She retired from a capricious world to make the best of it in the society of an affectionate brother; and fate, as though it took the part of her enemies, dries up this source of consolation likewise. Surely, I thought, there must be something extraordinary in this woman, who can retaliate the crosses of fortune, and make herself happy in spite of them. Was it incapability of feeling? Her attachment to those who had suffered in common with her, was a proof that she possessed feeling in no ordinary degree. Was it a dignity of endurance which the mass of human kind were not able to understand, because it was so far above them? If so, how pitiful was the triumph of those who outraged the memory she had left behind her, like the mantle on the horns of the beast, to be buffeted by blind and impotent malice!

I was drawn from my reverie by perceiving that the company in the other rooms was making a movement towards the theatre, which was formed in a building at a short distance from the house. It did infinite credit to amateur artists, and was filled according to its deserts, for to use the orthodox phrase, there was not even

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standing room. There must have been a gathering of the clans for weeks around, to produce so many pairs of baronial whiskers; for the town of Constance, like all towns which have fallen under the Austrian dominion, was ruined and depopulated, as if the plague had been in it, and had scarcely a grandee to boast of.

The first piece represented was a scrap of sentimentality, called "L'Espreuve d'Amour;" in which the hero recommends to his mistress a variety of lovers by way of trying her attachment to him, and eventually, being satisfied by the ordeal, proposes himself. The heroine was played by the dutchess, and in a manner which made me speedily forget that it was the dutchess, and not the actress, that I came to see. She had, indeed, a natural cast of melancholy, and a natural grace which rendered her little task no difficulty. Even when she was not speaking, one would have said that the stage had been her exclusive duty; and the silent tremour with which she returned her hard-hearted lover's picture, is associated with some of my choicest theatrical recollections. I regret that I have not the means of giving a few extracts from this dramaticle, for, whether from the habit which we have of thinking things good which have only been well said, or whether it really possessed

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intrinsic merit, I am inclined to think that it had something in it which would improve the breed of English farces amazingly. It certainly is a matter of congratulation that we have emerged from the whining days of Cumberland and his imitators: but still there is a field of simple and interesting nature, which might spring up most becomingly between the territories of broad grins and bloody daggers. It would give a character of literature to what is now considered an achievement only fit for those who can do nothing else, and might, perhaps, be a stepping-stone towards comedy herself, in all the pride of her five acts.

The next representation was of a brilliant bagatelle, entitled "Le Coiffeur." Before the curtain was drawn up I could not help feeling nervous for my little friend, who was to exhibit the result of three weeks' palpitating anxiety, and some thirty miles travelling to rehearsals, in the principal female character. She was equally afraid at first, and looked as if she had not quite made up her mind whether she was not ashamed to act her part, or to run away. She, however, soon became aware that she was thought bewitching, and played with a spirit, which not only won the heart of the young barber, but sundry others with which she had no

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business. For my own part, having had a bitter quarrel with her, in consequence of her insisting that Sir Hudson Lowe had poisoned Bonaparte, I found it absolutely necessary to humble myself and beg pardon.

After the play, we returned to the house, and found preparations made for dancing, which began with a waltz. I was told that some of the Germans performed their evolutions to perfection, but I cannot say that I admired this accomplishment so much in its native land, even as I did in England. It seemed that, to excel, it was necessary, in lieu of the swimming and now and then not ungraceful motion of my esteemed country women, to spin round like a tee-totum, with a wriggling sort of a hop, as if one leg were shorter than the other. I made a few unsuccessful attempts to distinguish myself, but was at last obliged to give in, for fear that I should tear my partner to rags in the vain endeavour to keep step. By degrees, the folks grew giddy, and made way for a quadrille, of which my previous failure rendered me rather shy. The *otium cum dignitate* which I had promised myself, was not, however, to be enjoyed, for I was presently brought out of my corner by a highly flattering but somewhat appalling invitation to stand up with the dutchess. I was

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in fact the only Englishman of our party who had ventured to contend for honour upon the fantastic toe, and was invited, I imagine, partly in sport, and partly from complaisance to my nation. As luck would have it, I represented my tribe without causing any particular accident, and, indeed, with considerable success: for a young Frenchman assured me that I really danced very well—that was to say, not *very* well—not so well as a Frenchman, but *quite well enough to please myself*. I was not, however, inclined to break a lance with him, for he allowed the dancing of the dutchess to be quite good enough *to please other people*. There was an absence of every thing French from it. It was a pastime and not a study with her: and she moved with the freedom of youth, tempered with the dignity that became the matron. This unpretending and spontaneous grace of nature has always struck me as being the only beauty of dancing in private society, and certainly it is a beauty irresistible. It is, in fact, a pantomimic display of the mind, and as such is as decidedly above the doctrine of professors as it is in opposition to it.

In the intervals between the dances, there was some singing, to the accompaniment of the piano. Here again Hortense was perfectly at home.

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She sang several songs, of which I afterwards found her to be the unacknowledged composer, and to which the writer has often listened with delight, with a feeling which, like her dancing, could never have been taught. Among these was the beautiful air of "Partant pour la Syrie," which will be a fair guarantee that I do not say too much for the rest. There were afterwards some well-bred endeavours to find a few English songs, which I am happy to say were unsuccessful. The French cannot understand our music, for it is altogether the note of another species of bird. Moore and our distinguished composers have made no progress in proportion to their merits, and, in a hap-hazard meeting with one of our national performances, it is odds but that we have reason to be ashamed of it.

By this time the hour was getting late, and, as the company began to thin, the remainder were dispersed in little parties round the various tables of drawing-books, and works of *belles-lettres*. I chanced to place my hand upon a splendid album, and had the farther good fortune to seat myself beside a beautiful young *dame de compagnie* of the dutchess, who gave me the history of all the treasures I found therein. Whatever I found most remarkable was still the

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work of Hortense. Of a series of small portraits, sketched by her in colours, the likeness of those of which I had seen the subjects would have struck me, though turned upside down. She had the same power and the same affectionate feeling for fixing the remembrance of places likewise. The landscapes which she had loved in forbidden France, even the apartments which she had inhabited, were executed in a manner that put to shame the best amateur performances I had ever seen. There was a minute attention to fidelity in them too, which a recollection of her present circumstances could not fail to bring home to the spectator's heart. There were, besides the labours of the dutchess, numerous admirable sketches by some of the best artists in France. I recollect one in particular, of a scene in which her taste for the picturesque and the melancholy must have been completely gratified. She was sitting amongst the ruins of Rome by moonlight, a party of friends reclining gracefully around her, and the poet Delavigne in front reciting a tragedy. In most people this situation would have been smiled at as somewhat romantic, but in Hortense it was perfectly in keeping. Ruin and tragedy had been too busy with her to let her seem out of place amongst them.

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I know not when my interest would have cooled in this mansion of taste and talent. Towards morning I was obliged to take my leave, and I doubt if there was any individual who returned home by that bright moonlight without feeling that Hortense had been born some century and a half too late. For an age of bigots and turncoats she indeed seemed unsuited; in that of true poetry and trusty cavaliers, she would have been the subject of the best rhymes and rencontres in romantic France.

After this I saw her frequently, both at her own house and at Wolfsberg, and I never found any thing to destroy the impression which I received on my introduction. Independently of the interest attached to herself, she had always in her company some person who had made a noise in the world, and had become an object of curiosity—one while a distinguished painter or poet, and one while a battered soldier, who preferred resting in retirement, to the imputation of changing his politics for advancement; then a grand duke or dutchess, who had undergone, perhaps, as many vicissitudes as herself; and finally, the widow of the unfortunate Marshal Ney. There was something in the last of these characters, particularly when associated

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with Hortense, more interesting than all the others. She was a handsome, but grave and silent woman, and still clad in mourning for her husband, whose death, so connected with the banishment of the duchess, could not fail to render them deeply sympathetic in each other's fortune. What a melancholy comparison of retrospections, I used to think, must these two have made when none were by to listen to them! What late discoveries of the imperfection of plots (if indeed they were ever consulted in any,) which could only succeed enough to render the situations of those who formed them worse than before! What anxious casuistry upon the justice of history, as to events which are mysterious even to the age existing. The amusements provided for all this company consisted of such as I have mentioned, expeditions to various beautiful spots in the neighbourhood, and music parties on the water. The last of these used sometimes to have a peculiarly romantic effect: for, on *fete days*, the young peasant girls, all glittering in their golden tinsel bonnets, would push off with their sweethearts, like mad things, in whatever boats they could find upon the beach. I have seen them paddling their little fleet round the dutchess's boat with all the curiosity of savages round a man of war, and

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filling up the interval of softer music with a yell, which, provided you heard it a mile off, was harmonious in the extreme!

For the gentlemen, there was likewise the *chasse*, at which they killed their time pleasantly enough, if they killed nothing else; for to confess the truth, I am grievously of the opinion that the French are but cockney sportsmen, and the Germans no better. I witnessed a *chasse* in the neighbourhood, which had well nigh put an end to my dancing *even well enough to please myself*. Our party, as was usual there, consisted of somewhere between twenty and thirty shooters, who, with their prodigious game-bags strapped behind and before, looked exactly like old clothes-men. There was likewise a regiment of little hideous boys, dressed in cocked hats, and looking as grotesque as the devil in Der Freischutz. This corps of flibbertigibbets was marshalled into the farther end of a wood, to howl German and tinkle bells through it, till the game was frightened into fits. In the mean time, the gunners had stationed themselves at intervals along the other three sides, each commanding a little narrow path way, so that when an unfortunate roebuck came skeltering down, he might fire in his face, and send him back to be terrified by somebody else. There happened

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to be plenty of game, so that when the howling began, the guns went as merrily as crackers on the 5th of November. In the midst of the bustle a poor hare was making the best of her way close by me, and, my next neighbour providing against the possibility of being too late by banging off both barrels before he saw her, I had the satisfaction of perceiving that she got clear off. My fellow-sportsman, however, who was an old soldier, and thought no more of a fowling piece than he did of a pop-gun, was determined to lose no credit for his dexterity. "*Voilà, Monsieur*," he shouted, "*voilà un joli coup! j'ai tiré entre vos jambes sans vous toucher.*" When the *melée* was over, we made search for the killed and wounded, the sum total of which was one of our *chasseurs*, who was indeed piteously peppered.

At length the time arrived for me to bid adieu to Switzerland. It was arranged that I should set out for Italy with a small party of my Wolfsberg friends: and, an evening or two before we departed, we paid a leave-taking visit to the dutchess. She expressed much polite regret at our intention, and gave us a cordial invitation to renew our acquaintance with her in the winter at Rome. Her care indeed to leave a good impression of her friendly disposition upon our

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minds was exceedingly gratifying. She professed to take an interest in the plans which each of us had formed, and, when her experience qualified her, gave us instructions for our travels. Her descriptions of the places, and circumstances of her own, were given in a manner which convinced me that I had only seen the surface of a mind, which, with more intimate knowledge, grew more and more rich. She spoke of the beauties of nature with a quiet enthusiasm, which was pure poetry, and touched upon character and literature with all the power, but without the venom, of the accomplished critic. If Hortense should ever occupy her leisure hours by writing her memoirs, they would form one of the most interesting works of the age.

When we rose to depart, the night being fine, she volunteered to walk part of the way home with us. She came about a quarter of a mile, to where she could command an uninterrupted view of the lake, above which the moon was just then rising—a huge red orb, which shot a burning column to her feet. "I will now bid you adieu," she said; and we left her to the calm contemplation of grandeur which could not fade, and enjoyments which could not betray.

This was the last I saw, and perhaps shall ever see, of the accomplished Hortense; but I

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shall always remember my brief acquaintance with her as a dip into days which gave her country the character of being the most polished of nations.

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NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Notes and Illustrations.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Some interesting details of the imprisonment of the Vicomte de Beauharnais, and of the behaviour of his children, will be found in the following letters, extracted from the "Memoirs of the Empress Josephine," the first of the French series, entitled "*Memoires Contemporaines.*"

Madame de Beauharnais to her aunt, Madame Fanny de Beauharnais.

"You would hardly believe, dear aunt, that my children have just undergone a long and minute examination! That wicked old man, the member of the committee, whom I have already mentioned to you, called upon me, and affecting to feel uneasy in regard to my husband, and to converse with me respecting him, he opened a conversation with my children. I acknowledge that I first

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fell into the snare; what surprised me, however, was the sudden affability of the man; he soon betrayed himself, however, by the malignity and even bitterness which he displayed, when the children replied in such a manner as to give him no advantage over their unhappy parents. I soon penetrated his artful intentions.

"When he found me on my guard, he threw off the mask, and admitting that he was desired to procure information from my children, which, he said, might be the more relied on, as it would bear the stamp of candour, he entered upon a formal examination. At that moment I felt an indescribable emotion, and the conflicting effects of fear, anger and indignation, alternately at work within me. I was even on the point of openly giving vent to my feelings against the hoary revolutionist, when I reflected that I might, by so doing, materially injure M. de Beauharnais, against whom that atrocious villain appears to have vowed perpetual enmity; I accordingly checked my angry passions. He desired me to leave him alone with my children; I attempted to resist; but his ferocious glance compelled me to give way.

"He confined Hortense in a closet, and began to put questions to her brother. My daughter's turn came next; as for this child, in whom he discovered a premature quickness and a penetration far above her age, he kept questioning her for a great length of time. After having sounded them respecting our common topics of conversation, our opinions, the visits and letters we were in the habit of receiving, but more particularly the occurrences they might have witnessed, he came to the main point, I mean the expressions used by Alexander. My children gave very proper replies, such in fact as were suited to their respective dispositions; and notwithstanding the artfulness of a mischievous man whose object is to discover

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guilt, the frankness of my son and the quick penetration of my daughter disconcerted his low cunning, and even defeated the object he had in view.

"What use is it intended to make of the replies of two children, whose language was that of truth? they can only redound to the triumph of innocence and the disgrace of my husband's accusers. Will they have the courage to bring that examination forward, if it should be productive of this double check upon their proceedings?"

—

To the same.

"My feelings were yesterday a prey to alternate sensations of pain and pleasure. My husband had expressed a desire to see his children; and thanks to our guardian angel his wish was complied with; but in order to spare their youthful feelings, I determined to send them at once, and Nevil undertook to usher them in. For some days past they had been told that their father having fallen ill, had placed himself under the care of a celebrated physician, who finding the air more pure in the palace of the Luxembourg, and plenty of vacant space, had taken up his abode in that edifice. The first interview went off very well, if we except the remark made by Hortense, that her papa's apartments were very small, and that the patients were very numerous. When it came to my turn, the children had already left their father, a worthy door-keeper having, at Nevil's instigation, removed them out of sight, and left them with some neighbours whose notice they had attracted by their youth, their position, and their innocent manners. I dreaded their being witnesses to our tender meeting,

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which took place during their absence. Alexander, who bears his imprisonment with great fortitude, was not, at first, proof against my tears; alarmed however at his excessive emotion, I used my endeavours to calm it, and began in my turn to console him. Our children again made their appearance, and this proved a fresh crisis, which was the more painful, as we had to disguise from their knowledge the cause of our emotion.

"Hortense, who is all candour, was for a long time the dupe of it; and in the warmth of her affection she wanted to persuade us that we were wrong to give way to sorrow, and that her papa's illness was not a dangerous one. Hortense had put on that little peevish and negative manner which, as you know, so well becomes her: 'Do you believe that papa is ill?' said she to her brother, 'at any rate, his complaint is not such as doctors can cure.' What do you mean, my child, said I, interrupting her; do you think that your father and I have connived to deceive you? 'Pardon me, mamma, but I do think so.' 'Oh! sister, what you are saying is very odd,' observed Eugene with warmth. 'It is on the contrary quite plain and natural.' What do you mean, mademoiselle? I again said, assuming a severe look. 'Surely,' continued the arch little girl, 'affectionate parents may be allowed to deceive their children, when they wish to spare their feelings?' So saying, she rushed into my arms, and threw her own round her father's neck. Smiles and tears added to the effect of this family scene, which my Eugene rendered still more affecting by his caresses. Sweet child! he is as endearing as his sister is witty; both have hitherto been a source of delight to us; why are they, in the present crisis, to excite our liveliest anxiety, and to occasion me in particular an indescribable sensation of pain which I am unable to conquer, and find it very dif-

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ficult to contend with? I have no apprehension on my own account; but I am in the utmost terror and alarm concerning them and my dearest Alexander!

"The occasional visits of my children, and the words overheard and picked up by my daughter, had enabled her to guess that her father was a prisoner. We acknowledged to her what it was no longer in our power to conceal. 'What has he done?' enquired Hortense. Her brother laying his usual timidity aside, was also anxious to know the motive of this act of severity. We should have found it very difficult to assign any. Singular abuse of power, guilty and contemptible stretch of arbitrary authority, which does not escape a child's penetration; which all the world should oppose, though no one ever ventures to complain.

"'Oh! we will punish your accusers,' exclaimed Hortense, 'as soon as we are strong enough.' 'Be silent, my child,' said her father; 'if you are overheard I am lost: you and your mother would be made to suffer for speaking this language, and we might not then enjoy the consolation of having afforded no pretence for their unjust treatment.' 'Have you not often told us,' observed Eugene, 'that it was proper to resist an act of oppression?' 'And I again repeat it,' rejoined my husband; 'our conduct must, however, be guided by the rules of prudence, and whosoever attempts to defeat the views of tyranny, must beware of awakening it from its slumbers.'

"By degrees, the conversation took a more cheerful turn. We forgot our present misfortunes, and indulged in tender recollections, and in plans for the future. You will readily suppose that you came in for a share of them. 'I wish my aunt every happiness,' said Alexander, with a smiling countenance; 'nevertheless, as the muses are never so interesting as when under the excitement of

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sorrow, I could wish that for a few days my aunt's inspiring goddess were familiarised with captivity; it would suggest to her pen a splendid elegy, and the poet's imagination, whilst immortalising her prison, would readily console her for having been one of its inmates.'

"What think you of this wish, my dearest aunt? you will perhaps see in it my husband's anxiety for your welfare; for my part, as I love you more than I do your poetry, I must form a contrary wish; and at the risk of your never sharing the glory of Ovid or of Madame de la Suze, I recommend you to write on in prose and retain the enjoyment of your liberty, in order that you may also indulge in the inclination you have most at heart, that of doing good to your fellow creatures."

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We add a letter from the vicomte, written immediately before his execution, and one from Josephine to her children, announcing the death of their father.

Last letter from M. de Beauharnais to his Wife.

Conciergerie,
Night of the 7th thermidor, year 2.

"I have yet a few minutes to devote to affection, tears and regret; and then I must wholly give myself up to the glory of my fate and to thoughts of immortality. When you receive this letter, my dear Josephine, your husband will have ceased to live, and will be tasting true existence in the bosom of his Creator. Do not weep for him; the wicked and senseless beings who survive him are more worthy of your tears, for they are doing mischief which they can never repair. But let us not cloud the present moments by any thoughts of their guilt; I wish

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on the contrary to brighten them by the reflection that I have enjoyed the affections of a lovely woman, and that our union would have been an uninterrupted course of happiness, but for errors which I was too late to acknowledge and atone for. This thought wrings tears from my eyes; though your generous heart pardons me. But this is no time to revive the recollection of my errors and your wrongs. What thanks I owe to Providence who will reward you!

"That Providence now disposes of me before my time. This is another blessing for which I am grateful. Can a virtuous man live happy when he sees the whole world a prey to the wicked? I should rejoice in being taken away, were it not for the thought of leaving those I love behind me. But if the thoughts of the dying are presentiments, something in my heart tells me that these horrible butcheries are drawing to a close;—that executioners will in their turn become victims, that the arts and sciences will again flourish in France; that wise and moderate laws will take place of cruel sacrifices; and that you will at length enjoy the happiness which you have always deserved. Our children will discharge the debt for their father.....

"I resume these incoherent and almost illegible lines, which were interrupted by the entrance of my jailers.

"I have just submitted to a cruel ceremony, which, under any other circumstances, I would have resisted, at the sacrifice of my life. Yet why should we rebel against necessity? reason tells us to make the best of it we can. My hair has been cut off. I had some idea of buying a part of it in order to leave to my wife and children an unequivocal pledge of my last recollection of them. Alas! my heart breaks at the very thought, and my tears bedew the paper on which I am writing. Adieu, all that I love!

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Think of me, and do not forget that to die the victim of tyrants and the martyr of liberty, sheds lustre on the scaffold."

—

Madame de Beauharnais to her Children.

"The hand which will deliver this to you is faithful and sure. You will receive it from a friend who knows and has shared my sorrows. I know not by what accident she has hitherto been spared. I call this accident fortunate; she regards it as a calamity. 'Is it not disgraceful to live,' said she yesterday, 'when all who are good have the honour of dying?' May heaven, as the reward of her courage, refuse her the fatal honour she desires!

"As for me, I am qualified for that honour, and I am preparing myself for receiving it. Why has disease spared me so long? But I must not murmur. As a wife, I ought to follow the fate of my husband; and can there now be any fate more glorious than to ascend the scaffold? It is a patent of immortality purchased by a prompt and pleasing death!

"My children, your father is dead, and your mother is about to follow him; but, as before that final stroke, the assassins leave me a few moments to myself, I wish to employ them in writing to you. Socrates, when condemned, philosophised with his disciples: a mother, on the point of undergoing a similar fate, may discourse with her children.

"My last sigh will be for you, and I wish to make my last words a lasting lesson. Time was when I gave you lessons in a more pleasing way; but the present will not

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be the less useful that it is given at so serious a moment. I have the weakness to water it with my tears; I shall soon have the courage to seal it with my blood.

"Hitherto it was impossible to have been happier than I have been; while to my union with your father I owed my felicity, I may venture to think and to say that to my character I was indebted for that union. It met with many difficulties, but without artifice or effort I overcame them. I found in my heart the means of winning the affection of my husband's relations; patience and gentleness always succeed at last in gaining the good will of others. You also, my dear children, possess natural advantages which cost little and are of great value; but you must learn how to employ them, and that is what I still feel a pleasure in teaching you by my example. * * *

"I lived with our aunt Renaudin, that excellent woman, that kind parent, that worthy soul, of whom we have so often spoke, and who has died with grief at seeing her niece sacrificed, as she long lamented, when her foresight separated us. I say her foresight, though perhaps it was then only her fondness.

"Circumstances brought to Martinique a handsome and meritorious young officer. I may be proud to praise him, he was your father, who after making me a happy wife was destined to render me a mother at once blessed and unfortunate.

"The husband of Madame Renaudin managed not only his own plantations, but those which the MM. Beauharnais inherited. The propriety of our union appeared unquestionable, especially as the marriage, planned by the two families for your uncle, had not his approbation, he he having made another choice.

"Here I must record the gratitude I owe to my excellent brother in law, who has under various circumstances

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given me proofs of the most sincere friendship, though he was of quite a different opinion from your father, who embraced the new ideas with all the enthusiasm of a lively imagination. He fancied liberty was to be secured by obtaining concessions from the king whom he venerated; but all was lost, and nothing gained but anarchy. Who will arrest the torrent? O God! unless thy powerful hand control and restrain it, we are undone!

"For my part, my children, I am about to die as your father died, a victim of the fury he always opposed, but to which he fell a sacrifice. I leave life without hatred of France and its assassins, whom I despise; but I am penetrated with sorrow for the misfortunes of my country. Honour my memory in sharing my sentiments. I leave for your inheritance the glory of your father, and the name of your mother, whom some who have been unfortunate will bear in remembrance. Love, regret, and benediction."

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According to the same work, Madame Fanny de Beauharnais took the unfortunate children under her protection, during the imprisonment of their parents.

"Madame Fanny de Beauharnais took under her care the children of Madame Alexander de Beauharnais, during the imprisonment of that most excellent of mothers, who ever retained a lively recollection of this favour. Her gratitude towards her aunt was unbounded, nor did the engagements which her elevated rank afterwards imposed upon her, induce her at any time to relax in the demonstration of her sentiments; she always called her a *second mother*, a title justly due to one who felt a truly maternal tenderness for her.

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"No doubt can be entertained of Josephine's excellent disposition, when we find the family of her first husband preserving for her a constant and unshaken attachment. They were lavish of their attentions at the time when her sorrow was at its height, and she never suffered the mortification of being slighted by her husband's relations, who appeared to have adopted her as one of their own family. I have already noticed the sincere friendship entertained for her by her worthy brother in law, the Marquis de Beauharnais."

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NOTE ON CHAPTER II.

It happened to us on one occasion, to request of the empress to show us her diamonds, which were locked up in a concealed cellar, the key of which was generally confided to Madame Gazani and M. Pierlot. She yielded with the most willing compliance to the wishes of such giddy girls as we were, ordered an immense table to be brought into the saloon, upon which several of her maids in waiting laid a countless number of caskets of every form and shape. They were spread upon that spacious table, which was absolutely covered with them. On the opening of the caskets, we were perfectly dazzled with the brilliancy, the size and the quantity of jewels composing the different sets. The most remarkable after those which consisted of white diamonds, were in the shape of pears, formed of pearls, perfectly regular, and of the finest colour; opals, rubies, sapphires and emeralds, were encircled with large diamonds, which were, nevertheless, considered as mere *mountings*, and never taken into account in the estimation made of those jewels; they formed altogether a collection which I believe to be unique in Europe, since they consisted of the most valuable objects, of that description, that could be found in the towns conquered by our armies. Napoleon was never under the necessity of seizing upon objects, which there was always evinced the utmost anxiety to offer to his wife; the garlands and bouquets formed of such a countless number of precious stones, had the effect of verifying the truth of the descriptions hitherto so fanciful, which

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are to be met with in the fairy tales. None but those who have seen this splendid collection can form an adequate idea of it.

The empress seldom wore any other than fancy jewels; the sight therefore, of this *exhibition* of caskets, excited the wonder of most of the beholders. Her majesty greatly enjoyed our silent admiration. After having permitted us to touch, and examine every thing at our leisure—"I had no other motive," she kindly said to us, "in ordering my jewels to be opened before you, than to spoil your fancy for such ornaments. After having seen such splendid sets, you never can feel a wish for inferior ones; the less so, when you reflect how unhappy I have been, although with so rare a collection at my command. During the first dawn of my extraordinary elevation, I delighted in these trifles, many of which were presented to me in Italy. I grew by degrees so tired of them, that I no longer wear any, except when I am in some respects compelled to do so by my new rank in the world; a thousand accidents may, besides, contribute to deprive me of those brilliant, though useless objects; do I not possess the pendants of Queen Maria Antoinette? and yet am I quite sure of retaining them? Trust to me, ladies, and do not envy a splendour which does not constitute happiness. I shall not fail to surprise you when I relate that I felt more pleasure at receiving an old pair of shoes, than at being presented with all the diamonds which are now spread before you." We could not help smiling at this observation, persuaded as we were that Josephine was not in earnest; but she repeated her assertions in so serious a manner, that we felt the utmost curiosity to hear the story of this *wonderful pair of shoes.*

"I repeat it, ladies, said her majesty, it is strictly true, that the present, which of all others has afforded me most

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pleasure, is a pair of *old shoes of the coarsest leather;* you will readily believe it when you shall have heard my story.

"I had set sail with Hortense, from Martinique, on board a ship in which we received such marked attentions, that they are indelibly impressed on my memory. Being separated from my first husband, my pecuniary resources were not very flourishing; the expense of my return to France, which the state of my affairs rendered necessary, had nearly drained me of every thing, and I found great difficulty in making the purchases which were indispensably requisite for the voyage. Hortense, who was a smart lively child, sang negro songs, and performed negro dances with admirable accuracy; she was the delight of the sailors, and in return for their fondness she had made them her favourite company. I no sooner fell asleep, than she slipped upon deck and rehearsed her various little exercises to the renewed delight and admiration of all on board. An old mate was particularly fond of her, and whenever he found a moment's leisure from his daily occupations, he devoted it to *his little friend*, who was also exceedingly attached to him. My daughter's shoes were soon worn out with her constant dancing and skipping. Knowing as she did that I had no other pair for her, and fearing lest I should prevent her going upon deck, if I should discover the plight of those she was fast wearing away, she concealed the trifling accident from my knowledge. I saw her once returning with bleeding feet, and asked her, in the utmost alarm, if she had hurt herself: "No, mamma." "But your feet are bleeding." "It really is nothing." I insisted upon ascertaining what ailed her, and discovered that her shoes were all in tatters, and that her flesh was dreadfully torn by a nail.

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"We had as yet only performed half the voyage; a long time would necessarily elapse before I could procure a fresh pair of shoes; and I was mortified at the bare anticipation of the distress my poor Hortense would now feel at being compelled to remain confined in my wretched little cabin, and of the injury her health might experience from the want of exercise. At the moment when I was wrapped up in sorrow, and giving free vent to my tears, our friend the mate made his appearance, and enquired with his honest bluntness what was the cause of our *whimperings*? Hortense replied in a sobbing voice, that she could no longer go upon deck, because she had torn her shoes, and I had no others to give her. "Is that all? I have an old pair in my trunk; let me go for them. You, madam, will cut them up, and I shall sew them over again to the best of my power; every thing on board ship should be turned to account; this is not the place for being too nice or particular; we have our most important wants gratified, when we have the needful." He did not wait for our reply, but went in quest of his old shoes, which he brought to us with an air of exultation, and offered them to Hortense, who received the gift with every demonstration of delight.

"We set to work with the greatest alacrity, and my daughter was enabled, towards the close of day, to enjoy the pleasure of again amusing the ship's company. I repeat that no present was ever received by me with more sincere gratitude. I greatly reproached myself for having neglected to make enquiries after the worthy seaman, who was only known on board by the name of James. I should have felt a sincere satisfaction in rendering him some service, since it was afterwards in my power to do so."—*Memoirs of the Empress Josephine*, v. 2.

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NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

MARRIAGE OF JOSEPHINE.

*Madame de Beauharnais to Madame ****

"I am urged, my dear, to marry again, by the advice of all my friends, (I may almost say,) by the commands of my aunt, and the prayers of my children. Why are you not here to help me by your advice on this important occasion, and to tell me whether I ought or not to consent to a union, which certainly seems calculated to relieve me from the discomforts of my present situation? Your friendship would render you clearsighted to my interests, and a word from you would suffice to bring me to a decision.

"Among my visiters you have seen General Bonaparte: he is the man who wishes to become a father to the orphans of Alexander de Beauharnais, and a husband to his widow.

"Do you love him? is naturally your first question. My answer is, perhaps...No.—Do you dislike him?—No, again; but the sentiments I entertain towards him are of that lukewarm kind which true devotees think worst of all in matters of religion. Now love being a sort of religion, my feelings ought to be very different from what they really are. This is the point on which I want your advice, which would fix the wavering of my irresolute disposition. To come to a decision has always been too much for my creole inertness, and I find it easier to obey the wishes of others.

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"I admire the general's courage; the extent of his information on every subject on which he converses; his shrewd intelligence, which enables him to understand the thoughts of others, before they are expressed; but I confess I am somewhat fearful of that control which he seems anxious to exercise over all about him. There is something in his scrutinising glance that cannot be described; it awes even our directors, therefore it may well be supposed to intimidate a woman. He talks of his passion for me with a degree of earnestness which renders it impossible to doubt his sincerity, yet this very circumstance which you would suppose likely to please me, is precisely that which has withheld me from giving the consent which I have often been on the very point of uttering.

"My spring of life is past. Can I then hope to preserve, for any length of time, that ardour of affection which, in the general, amounts almost to madness? If his love should cool, as it certainly will, after our marriage, will he not reproach me for having prevented him from forming a more advantageous connection? What then shall I say? What shall I do? I may shut myself up and weep. Fine consolation, truly! methinks I hear you say. But unavailing as I know it is, weeping is, I assure you, my only consolation whenever my poor heart receives a wound. Write to me quickly, and pray scold me if you think me wrong. You know every thing is welcome that comes from you.

"Barras assures me if I marry the general he will get him appointed commander in chief of the army of Italy. This favour, though not yet granted, occasions some murmuring among Bonaparte's brother officers. When speaking to me yesterday on the subject, the general said: "Do they think I cannot get forward without their patronage? One day or other they will all be too happy if

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I grant them mine. I have a good sword by my side, which will carry me on."

"What do you think of this self confidence? Does it not savour of excessive vanity? a general of brigade to talk of patronising the chiefs of the government? It is very ridiculous! Yet I know not how it happens, his ambitious spirit sometimes wins upon me so far that I am almost tempted to believe in the practicability of any project he takes into his head;—and who can foresee what he may attempt!

"All here regret your absence; and we only console ourselves by constantly speaking of you, and by endeavouring to follow you step by step, in the beautiful country in which you are journeying. Were I sure of finding you in Italy, I would consent to be married to-morrow, on condition of being permitted to accompany the general. But we might cross each other on the way, therefore I think it most prudent to await your answer; pray send it speedily.

"Madame Tallien desires me to present her love to you. She is still fair and good as ever. She employs her immense influence only for the benefit of the unfortunate; and when she performs a favour she appears as pleased and satisfied as though she herself were the obliged party. Her friendship for me is most affectionate and sincere, and of my regard for her, I need only say that it is equal to that which I entertain for you.

"Hortense grows more and more interesting every day. Her pretty figure is getting fully developed, and if I were so inclined, I should have ample reason to rail at time, who confers charms on the daughter at the expense of the mother. But truly I have other things in my head. I try to banish gloomy thoughts, and look forward to a more propitious future, for we shall soon meet never to

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part again. But for this marriage, which harasses and unsettles me, I could be gay in spite of every thing; were it once over, happen what might, I could resign myself to my fate. I am inured to suffering, and if I be destined to taste fresh sorrow I can support it, provided my children, my aunt and you remain to comfort me.

"You know we have agreed to dispense with all formal terminations to our letters. So adieu, my friend!"

Memoirs of Josephine, vol. 3.

—

BONAPARTE'S JEALOUSY.

Madame Bonaparte to General Bonaparte.

"Is it possible, general, that the letter I have just received comes from you? I can scarcely credit it when I compare that letter with others now before me, to which your love imparts so many charms! My eyes indeed would persuade me that your hand traced these lines; but my heart refuses to believe that a letter from you could ever have caused the mortal anguish I experience on perusing these expressions of your displeasure, which afflict me the more when I consider how much pain they must have cost you.

"I know not what I have done to provoke some malignant enemy to destroy my peace by disturbing yours; but certainly a powerful motive must influence some one in continually renewing calumnies against me, and giving them a sufficient appearance of probability to impose on the man who has hitherto judged me worthy of his affection and confidence. These two sentiments are necessary to my happiness, and if they are to be so soon

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withdrawn from me, I can only regret that I was ever blest in possessing them or knowing you.

"On my first acquaintance with you, the affliction with which I was overwhelmed led me to believe that my heart must ever remain a stranger to any sentiment resembling love. The sanguinary scenes of which I had been a witness and a victim constantly haunted my thoughts. I therefore apprehended no danger to myself from the frequent enjoyment of your society, still less did I imagine that I could for a single moment have fixed your choice.

"I, like every one else, admired your talents and acquirements; and better than any one else, I foresaw your future glory; but still I loved you only for the services you rendered to my country. Why did you seek to convert admiration into a more tender sentiment, by availing yourself of all those powers of pleasing with which you are so eminently gifted, since, so shortly after having united your destiny with mine, you regret the felicity you have conferred upon me?

"Do you think I can ever forget the love you once cherished for me? Can I ever become indifferent to the man who has blest me with the most enthusiastic and ardent passion? Can I ever efface from my memory your paternal affection for Hortense, the advice and example you have set before Eugene? If all this appears impossible, how can you for a moment suspect me of bestowing a thought on any but yourself?

"Instead of listening to traducers who, for reasons which I cannot explain, seek to disturb our happiness, why do you not silence them by enumerating the benefits you have bestowed on a woman whose heart could never be reproached with ingratitude? The knowledge of what you have done for my children would check the

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malignity of these calumniators, for they would then see that the strongest link of my attachment for you depends on my character as a mother. Your subsequent conduct which has claimed the admiration of all Europe could have no other effect than to make me adore the husband who gave me his hand when I was poor and unfortunate. Every step you take adds to the glory of the name I bear: yet this is the moment that has been selected for persuading you that I no longer love you! Surely nothing can be more wicked and absurd than the conduct of those who are about you, and are jealous of your marked superiority!

"Yes, I still love you, and no less tenderly than ever. Those who allege the contrary know that they speak falsely. To those very persons I have frequently written to enquire about you and to recommend them to console you by their friendship, for the absence of her who is your best and truest friend.

"Yet, what has been the conduct of the men in whom you repose confidence and on whose testimony you form so unjust an opinion of me? They conceal from you every circumstance calculated to alleviate the anguish of our separation, and they seek to fill your mind with suspicion, in order to drive you from a country with which they are dissatisfied. Their object is to make you unhappy. I see this plainly; though you are blind to their perfidious intentions. Being no longer their equal you have become their enemy, and every one of your victories is a fresh ground of envy and hatred.

"I know their intrigues, and I disdain to avenge myself by naming the men whom I despise, but whose valour and talents may be useful to you in the great enterprise which you have so propitiously commenced. When you return, I will unmask these enemies of your

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glory—but no; the happiness of seeing you again will banish from my recollection the misery they are endeavouring to inflict upon me, and I shall think only of what they have done to promote the success of your projects.

"I acknowledge that I see a great deal of company; for every one is eager to compliment me on your success, and I confess I have not resolution to close my door against those who speak of you. I also confess that a great portion of my visiters are gentlemen. Men understand your bold projects better than women, and they speak with enthusiasm of your glorious achievements, while my female friends only complain of you for having carried away their husbands, brothers, or fathers. I take no pleasure in their society if they do not praise you; yet there are some among them whose hearts and understandings claim my highest regard, because they entertain sincere friendship for you. In this number I may distinguish Mesdames d'Aiguillon, Tallien, and my aunt. They are almost constantly with me, and they can tell you, ungrateful as you are, whether *I have been coquetting with every body.* These are your words, and they would be hateful to me were I not certain that you have disavowed them and are sorry for having written them.

"I am terrified at the numerous perils which surround you, and of the extent of which I should have had no idea, had not Eugene insisted on my writing to entreat that you will not fly in the face of danger, and unnecessarily expose a life which is precious not merely to your family and friends. Remember that on you depends the destiny of your companions in arms and of millions of soldiers, who would not have fortitude to endure the hardships to which they are exposed, but for the encouragement which your presence affords them.

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"Do not, I conjure you, over exert your strength. Listen not to the dictates of your own ever active mind, but to the advice of those who love you. Berthier, Bourrienne, Eugene, and Caffarelli, who are more cool than you, may sometimes view things more justly. They are devoted to you, therefore listen to them; but to them only, and you and I shall be happy.

"I sometimes receive honours here which cause me no small degree of embarrassment. I am not accustomed to this sort of homage, and I see it is displeasing to our authorities, who are always suspicious and fearful of losing their newly gotten power. Never mind them, you will say; and I should not, but that I know they will try to injure you, and I cannot endure the thought of contributing in any way to those feelings of enmity which your triumphs sufficiently account for. If they are envious now, what will they be when you return crowned with fresh laurels? Heaven knows to what lengths their malignity will then carry them! But you will be here, and then nothing can vex me.

"But I will say no more of them nor of your suspicions, which I do not refute one by one, because they are all equally devoid of probability; and to make amends for the unpleasant commencement of this letter, I will tell you something which I know will please you.

"Hortense, in her efforts to console me, endeavours as far as possible to conceal her anxiety for you and her brother, and she exerts all her ingenuity to banish that melancholy, the existence of which you doubt, but which, I assure you, never forsakes me. If by her lively conversation and interesting talents, she sometimes succeeds in drawing a smile from me, she joyfully exclaims: 'Dear mamma, that will be known at Cairo.' The fatal word immediately calls to my mind the distance which

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separates me from you and my son, and restores the melancholy which it was intended to divert. I am obliged to make great efforts to conceal my grief from my daughter, who, by a word or a look, transports me to the very place which she would wish to banish from my thoughts.

"Hortense's figure is daily becoming more and more graceful. She dresses with great taste, and though not quite so handsome as your sisters, she may certainly be thought agreeable, when even they are present.

"My good aunt passes her life in suffering without complaining, consoling the distressed, speaking of you, and writing poetry. For my part, my time is occupied in writing to you, hearing your praises, reading the journals, in which your name appears in every page, thinking of you, looking forward to the time when I may see you hourly, complaining of your absence and longing for your return; and when my task is ended I begin it over again. Are all these proofs of indifference? You will never have any others from me, and if I receive no worse from you, I shall have no great reason to complain, in spite of the ill natured stories I hear about *a certain lady*, in whom you are said to take a lively interest. But why should I doubt you? You assure me that you love me, and, judging of your heart by my own, I believe you.

"Heaven knows when or where you will receive this letter. May it restore you to that confidence which you ought never to have lost, and convince you more than ever, that as long as I live I shall love you as dearly as I did on the day of our separation. Adieu—believe me—love me, and receive a thousand kisses."

Memoirs of Josephine, vol. 3.

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No language can convey any idea of the state of excitement occasioned throughout France, by Bonaparte's arrival. From the 18th Vendemiaire, all around us was in continual agitation. On the 19th, Josephine set off to meet her husband, but without knowing exactly what road he would take. She thought it likely he would come by the way of Burgundy, and therefore Louis and she set off for Lyons.

Madame Bonaparte was a prey to great and well founded uneasiness. Whether she were guilty, or only imprudent, she was strongly accused by the Bonaparte family, who were desirous that Napoleon should obtain a divorce. The elder M. de Caulaincourt stated to us his apprehensions on this point; but whenever the subject was introduced, my mother changed the conversation, because, knowing as she did, the sentiments of the Bonaparte family, she could not reply without either committing them, or having recourse to falsehood. She knew, moreover, the truth of many circumstances which M. de Caulaincourt seemed to doubt, and which her situation with respect to Bonaparte prevented her from communicating to him.

Madame Bonaparte committed a great fault in neglecting at this juncture to conciliate her mother-in-law, who might have protected her against those who sought her ruin; and, indeed, effected it nine years later; for the divorce in 1809 was brought about by the joint efforts of all the members of the Bonaparte family, aided by some of Napoleon's most confidential servants, whom Josephine, either as Madame Bonaparte, or as empress, had done nothing to make her friends.

Bonaparte on his arrival in Paris found his house deserted; but his mother, sisters, and sisters-in-law, and in short, every member of his family, except Louis, who

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had attended Madame Bonaparte to Lyons, came to him immediately. The impression made upon him by the solitude of his home and its desertion by its mistress, was profound and terrible; and nine years afterward, when the ties between him and Josephine were severed for ever, he showed that it was not effaced. From not finding her with his family, he inferred that she felt herself unworthy of their presence, and feared to meet the man she had wronged. He considered her journey to Lyons as a mere pretence.

M. de Bourrienne says, that for some days after Josephine's return, Bonaparte treated her with *extreme coldness.* As he was an eyewitness, why does he not state the whole truth, and say that on her return, Bonaparte *refused to see her, and did not see her?* It was to the earnest entreaties of her children that she owed the recovery, not of her husband's love, for that had long ceased, but of that tenderness acquired by habit, and that intercourse which made her still retain the rank of consort to the greatest man of his age. Bonaparte was, at this period, much attached to Eugene Beauharnais, who, to do him justice, was a charming youth. He knew less of Hortense; but her youth and sweetness of temper, and the protection of which, as his adopted daughter, she besought him not to deprive her, proved powerful advocates, and overcame his resistance. In this delicate negotiation, it was good policy not to bring any other person into play, whatever might be their influence with Bonaparte, and Madame Bonaparte did not, therefore, have recourse either to Barras, Bourrienne, or Berthier. It was expedient that they who interceded for her should be able to say any thing without the possibility of a reply. Now Bonaparte could not with any degree of propriety explain to such children as Eugene or Hortense

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the particulars of their mother's conduct. He was, therefore, constrained to silence, and had no argument to combat the tears of two innocent creatures at his feet, exclaiming, "Do not abandon our mother; she will break her heart! And ought injustice to take from us poor orphans, whose natural protector the scaffold has already deprived us of, the support of one whom Providence has sent to replace him!"

The scene, as Bonaparte has since stated, was long and painful, and the two children at length introduced their mother, and placed her in his arms. The unhappy woman had awaited his decision at the door of a small back staircase, extended at almost full length upon the stairs, suffering the acutest pangs of mental torture.

Whatever might be his wife's errors, Bonaparte appeared entirely to forget them, and the reconciliation was complete. Of all the members of the family, Madame Leclerc was most vexed at the pardon which Napoleon had granted to his wife. Bonaparte's mother was also very ill pleased; but she said nothing. Madame Joseph Bonaparte, who was always very amiable, took no part in these family quarrels; therefore, she could easily determine what part to take when fortune smiled on Josephine. As to Madame Bacciocchi, she gave free vent to her ill humour and disdain: the consequence was, that her sister-in-law could never endure her. Christine, who was a beautiful creature, followed the example of Madame Joseph, and Caroline was so young that her opinion could have no weight in such an affair. As to Bonaparte's brothers, they were at open war with Josephine. —*Memoirs of the Dutchess D'Abrantes*, p. 211.

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HORTENSE'S LOVERS.

Josephine to Eugene Beauharnais, in Egypt.

"I learn with great pleasure, my dear Eugene, that your conduct is worthy of the name you bear, and of the protector under whom it is so easy to learn to become a great captain.

"Bonaparte has written to me that you are every thing he can wish, and as he is no flatterer my heart is proud to read your eulogy, sketched by a hand which is usually far from being lavish in praise. You well know I never doubted your capability to undertake great things, or the brilliant courage which you inherit; but you, alas! know how much I disliked your removal from me, fearing that your natural impetuosity might carry you too far, and that it might prevent you from submitting to the numerous petty details of discipline, which must be very disagreeable when the rank is only subaltern.

"Judge then of my joy on learning that you remember my advice, and that you are as obedient to your superiors in command, as you are kind and humane to those beneath you. This conduct, my child, makes me quite happy, and these words, I know, will reward you more than all the favours you can receive. Read them often, and repeat to yourself that your mother, though far from you, complains not of her lot, since she knows that yours will be brilliant, and will deserve so to be.

"Your sister shares all my feelings, and will tell you so herself. But that of which I am sure she will not speak, and which is therefore my duty to tell, is her attention to me and to her aunt! Love her, my son, for to me she brings consolation, and she overflows with affec-

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tion for you! She prosecutes her studies with uncommon success, but music, I believe, will be the art she will carry to the highest perfection. With her sweet voice, which is now well cultivated, she sings romances in a manner that would surprise you. I have just bought her a new piano from the best maker, Erard, which redoubles her passion for that charming art, which you prefer to every other; that, perhaps, accounts for your sister applying to it with so much assiduity.

"Were you here you would be telling me a thousand times a day, to beware of the men who pay particular attention to Hortense. Some there are who do so, whom you do not like, and whom you seem to fear she may prefer. Set your mind at rest; she is a bit of a coquette, is pleased with her success, and torments her victims; but her heart is free. I am the confidant of all her thoughts and feelings, which have hitherto been just what they ought to be. She now knows that when she thinks of marrying, it is not my consent alone she has to seek, and that my will is subordinate to that of the man to whom we owe every thing. The knowledge of this fact must prevent her from fixing her choice in a way that may not meet the approval of Bonaparte, and the latter will not give your sister in marriage to any one to whom you can object."

I know not the names of the young gentlemen who were so eager to pay homage to Mademoiselle Hortense de Beauharnais. The prospect of her future destiny was brilliant, and she was surrounded by a crowd of admirers, all zealously endeavouring to please her; but encouragement was given to none. When I saw her for the first time, which was six months before her marriage, no individual was yet pointed out as having fixed the choice of this young lady, whom so many parents anxiously

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wished to make their daughter-in-law. Since then it has been reported that she had a partiality for General P——, but at that time no such thing was mentioned, and I believe there is no truth in the story.

General P—— was very handsome, but the other members of his family were far from possessing the like advantage. The following anecdote of their remarkable plainness may be related here.

They were emigrants at the same period as my family. One evening the Duke de Fleuri, who, in despite of the privations of exile, was full of life and gaiety, visited the Princess de Vaudemont, after an absence of some months. He was acquainted with old M. de P—— and, after saluting him, said:—Pray, who is this horrible looking woman sitting beside the charming Madame de Fougy, as it were for the purpose of producing a contrast?—That lady is my wife, answered M. de P—— with rather a lengthened countenance.—Oh! no, replied the duke, I know Madame de P—— very well; (it was to her, however, his question referred) she is very agreeable .... I mean that one on the other side of Madame de Fougy .... she is really frightful.—Ah! that is my sister. Well, my dear P——, this is quite distressing, there is no extricating one's self from such an embarrassment with you, for there never was so extraordinary a family.

Memoirs of Josephine, vol. 3.

Bourrienne gives the following account of another love affair of Hortense with Duroc, afterwards Duc de Frioul—a much more distinguished personage than the obscure royalist chief. We are disposed, however, to attach little or no credit to the story, which we have only extracted because some notice of it seemed essential in the memoirs of its heroine. It is improbable that

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Duroc, who was of a cold, phlegmatic temperament, and neither romantic nor uncalculating, should have chosen to relinquish the hopes presented by so splendid an alliance, simply because it involved his temporary absence from the person of the first consul. His very attachment to Napoleon, which is the alleged ground of refusal, could only have been an additional motive for his consent. The tale may be safely set down as another instance of the vanity and misrepresentation, so characteristic of the work and of its author.

"Bonaparte said, at St. Helena, speaking of Louis and Hortense, that 'they loved each other when they married: they desired to be united. The marriage was, too, the result of Josephine's intrigues, who found her account in it.' One fact is certain, and that is, that they did not love each other at all. Hortense was passionately attached to Duroc, who did not return her affection with equal ardour. The first consul consented to their marriage; but Josephine, who was desirous of obtaining some support against her brothers-in-law, who never ceased to persecute her, wished to have Hortense united to Louis. She acquainted me with her wish, and I told her that she had concealed her intentions too long, as I had promised my services in favour of the young lovers, and had done so the more willingly because I knew the first consul's opinion was favourable to the union with Duroc. I added, that her daughter could not restrain her tears when Louis was mentioned to her as a husband. The first consul, in the expectation that Duroc's marriage with Hortense would take place, had sent to him his brevet, as general of division, by an extraordinary courier, who went to Holland, through which Duroc had to pass on his return from St. Petersburgh.

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"During Duroc's absence, the correspondence of the young lovers passed, by their consent, through my hands. Every night I used to make one in a party at billiards, at which Hortense played very well. When I told her, in a whisper, that I had got a letter for her, she would immediately leave off playing, and run to her chamber, where I followed, and gave her Duroc's epistle. When she opened it, her eyes would fill with tears, and it was some time before she could return to the saloon.

"When we were at Malmaison those intrigues continued. At the Tuileries the same conduct was pursued, but then the probability of success was on Duroc's side; I even felicitated him on his prospects, but he received my compliments in a very cold manner. In a few days after, Josephine succeeded in changing the whole face of affairs. Her heart was entirely set on the marriage of Louis with her daughter; and prayers, entreaties, caresses, and all those little arts which she so well knew how to use, were employed to persuade the first consul to her purpose. On the 4th January the first consul, after dinner, entered our cabinet, where I was at work, 'Where is Duroc?' he enquired. 'He has gone out to the opera, I believe.'—'Tell him, as soon as he returns, that I have promised Hortense to him, and he shall have her. But I wish the marriage to take place in two days, at the latest. I will give him five hundred thousand francs, and name him commandant of the eighteenth military division; but he must set out the day after his marriage, with his wife, for Toulon. We must live apart; I want no son-in-law at home. As I wish to come to some conclusion, let me know to-night whether this plan will satisfy him.'—'I think it will not.'—'Very well! then she shall marry Louis.'—'Will she like it?'—'It must be.' The first consul gave

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me these directions in a very abrupt manner, which made me think that some little domestic warfare had been raging, and that to put an end to it, he had come to propose his ultimatum. At half past six in the evening, Duroc returned; I reported to him, word for word, the proposition of the first consul. 'Since it has come to that, my good friend,' said he, 'tell him, he may keep his daughter, for me; I am going to see the ——,' and, with an indifference for which I cannot account, he took his hat, and went off. The first consul, before going to bed, was informed of Duroc's reply, and Josephine received from him the promise that Louis and Hortense should be married. The marriage took place a few days after, to the great regret of Hortense, and, probably, to the satisfaction of Duroc. Louis submitted to have a woman, who had hitherto avoided him as much as possible, forced upon him for a wife. She always manifested as much indifference for him, as he displayed repugnance for her, and those sentiments are not yet effaced.

"Napoleon said, at St. Helena, that he wished to unite Louis with a niece of Talleyrand. I can only say, that I never heard a word of this niece, either from himself, his wife, or her daughter; and, I rather think, that at that time the first consul was looking after a royal alliance for Louis. He often expressed regret at the precipitate marriages of his sisters. It should be recollected, that we were now in the year which saw the consulship for life established, and which, consequently, gave presage of the empire. Napoleon truly said to the companions of his exile, that 'Louis's marriage was the result of Josephine's intrigues;' but I cannot understand how he never mentioned the intention he once had of uniting Hortense to Duroc."

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NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

Madame de Montesson gave the first ball that took place in honour of the marriage of Louis Bonaparte and Mademoiselle de Beauharnais. Invitations were issued for seven hundred persons. There was as yet no imperial court, for Napoleon was only consul: though then young, I could not fail to remark the eager attention and servile flattery evinced by all classes to the Bonaparte family, whose fortunes already dawned so brilliantly, that there was no calculating what ambition might aim at when encouraged by such unexampled success. The foreign ambassadors were present at Madame de Montesson's fête, which was on a most magnificent scale. Every countenance beamed with joy, save that of the bride, whose profound melancholy formed a sad contrast to the happiness which she might have been expected to evince. She was covered with diamonds and flowers, and yet her countenance and manner showed nothing but regret. It was easy to foresee the mutual misery that would arise out of this ill assorted union. Louis Bonaparte showed but little attention to his bride; and she, on her part, seemed to shun his very looks, lest he should read in hers the indifference she felt towards him.

This indifference daily augmented, in spite of the affectionate advice of Josephine, who anxiously sought to produce some congeniality of feeling in the newly married couple. But all her endeavours were useless.

I subjoin two letters which she wrote to her beloved

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daughter some time before her separation from her husband was deemed indispensable. They show how earnestly Josephine desired to see Hortense in the possession of that happiness and peace of mind to which she was herself a stranger. Her daughter's unhappy marriage, which she foresaw, but could not prevent, was a source of deep distress to her. If she enjoyed any consolation under this affliction, it was that of witnessing the uninterrupted harmony which prevailed between the viceroy and vice-queen. But, after all, can any thing soothe the sorrow of a mother who sees her daughter's happiness blighted for ever?

To Queen Hortense.

"I was deeply grieved at what I heard a few days ago; and what I saw yesterday confirmed and increased my distress. Why show this repugnance to Louis? Instead of rendering it the more annoying by caprice and inequality of temper, why not endeavour to surmount it? You say he is not amiable! every thing is relative. If he is not so to you, he may be so to others, and all women do not see him through the veil of dislike. To me, who am disinterested, and who view him as he really is, he appears to be more disposed to love than fitted to be beloved, and that is certainly a valuable quality. He is generous, benevolent and affectionate. He is a good father, and, if you choose, he may be a good husband. His melancholy and his taste for study and retirement render him disagreeable to you. But, let me ask you, is this his fault? Do you expect him to change his nature according to circumstances? Who could have foreseen his altered fortune? You say he has not courage to maintain it; but that is a mistake.

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I should rather say he is not suited to it. With his secluded habits and his unconquerable love of retirement and study, he is out of place in the elevated station to which he has been raised. You wish that he resembled his brother, but he must first have his brother's temperament. You must have remarked that all our existence depends on health, and health upon digestion. If poor Louis's digestion were better, you would find him much more amiable. But as he is, there is nothing to justify the indifference and dislike you evince towards him. You, Hortense, who used to be so good should contiaue so now, when it is most requisite. Take pity on a man who is to be pitied for what would constitute the happiness of another. Before you condemn him read once again the letters of Madame de Maintenon; she too groaned under the weight of her greatness, and bedewed with her tears a diadem for which she conceived her brow was never destined."

To the same.

"You misunderstand me, my dear; there is nothing equivocal in my style, as there is nothing uncandid in my heart. How could you ever imagine that I share certain absurd, or perhaps interested opinions? Surely you cannot believe that I look upon you as my rival. We both reign over the same heart, but by titles very different, though equally sacred; and those who view my husband's affection for you in any other light than that of a friend and a father, know little of his heart. His soul takes too lofty a flight to be accessible to any vulgar passions. Glory engrosses him more perhaps than is conducive to our happiness; but the love of glory is incompatible with any thing base. Such is my

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profession of faith with regard to my husband. I frankly communicate it, in the hope that it will calm your apprehensions. When I advise you to love, or at least not to repulse Louis, I speak to you as an experienced wife, a fond mother, and a friend; and in these three characters, which are all equally dear to me. I tenderly embrace you."—*Mem. of Josephine*, vol. 1.

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Louis Bonaparte was not amiss at eighteen: subsequently his infirmities gave him the appearance of an old man before his time: this rendered him morose in appearance, and in reality miserable. He resembled the queen of Naples when he was young and in health: there was the same cast of countenance, and the same expression in the look, when the features of the queen of Naples were at rest; but, as soon as they were animated by her smile or her look, all resemblance vanished.

Louis is a mild, easy, good natured man. The emperor, with his whim of making kings of all his brothers, could not find one who would fall in with it. His sisters seconded him, for they were devoured by ambition; but on this point the men have always shown a firm and determined will. Louis told him as much when he was setting out for Holland. "I will do what I like," said the young king to his brother. "Let me act freely or let me remain here. I will not go to govern a country where I shall be known only by disaster."

The emperor was absolute in his will. He sent Louis to Holland: the unfortunate young man went to expeperience a slow and cruel agony among its canals and marshes. The greater part of his present ailments pro-

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ceed from that damp atmosphere, particularly unhealthy for a child of the south, like him. He obeyed, and his wife was destined there to feel the keenest anguish: her maternal heart was wrung by the death of her first born. —*Memoirs of the Dutchess D'Abrantes*, p. 165.

NOTE ON CHAPTER VI.

The French make sad work with foreign proper names. In the account of the deputation to Louis, for Bracedzen and Van Styreau, we must read Brantzen and Van Styren. These errors, however, are not to be compared with the ingenious mistake of a Spanish annalist of the war of the succession, who contrived to transmute *Townsend* into *Toureskendem*, to the great perplexity of subsequent historians.

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NOTE ON CHAPTER VIII.

While Queen Hortense was at the Hague, she received as a new year's present from her mother, an immense chest filled with the choicest play things that the genius of Grancher and Giroux could invent. It was designed for young Napoleon, whose premature death drove part of the imperial family almost to distraction, and was perhaps the cause of all the subsequent events.

The child, who was seated near a window opening on the park, appeared careless of all the presents that were spread before him: he was constantly looking towards the opposite avenue. The queen, impatient at seeing him less delighted than she expected, asked him if he was not grateful to his grandmama, for her kindness in sending whatever she thought would give him pleasure. "Indeed I am, mamma! but it does not surprise me. She is always so good that I am used to it." "Then you are not amused with all these pretty play things?" "Oh! yes, mamma, but"..... "But what?" "I am very anxious for something else." "Mention it, my child, depend upon my giving it to you." "No, mamma, indeed you wo'nt." "Do you want money for the poor?" "Papa gave me some this morning: I have given it all away already—I want"—"Go on, you know how much I love you; you may be sure I wish to begin the year by pleasing you: tell me, darling, what do you wish." "Mamma, I want you to let me run

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about in that pretty mud in the avenue: that will amuse me more than any thing else."

It may be readily supposed that the queen did not indulge this strange whim of her son; it was a great disappointment for the young prince, who complained constantly that new year's day was very dull, that he was tired and could never be contented unless he could run about in the rain, like other little boys. Fortunately a severe frost soon dried the pretty mud and the prince's tears.

This child evinced a determined character, and a strong taste for a military life: he was extremely intelligent, and showed great quickness in every thing requiring reflection. This accounts for the great partiality of Napoleon, who was delighted with the idea of beholding him, hereafter, worthy to be his successor.

The disease which attacked him was equally sudden and violent: M. Latour, first physician to King Louis, paid him the most assiduous attention. It was unavailing: in a few hours the prince was lost to the affections of his mother. Hortense never quitted him for an instant: when the blow was at length struck, force was requisite to remove her from the chamber of death. Her arms were clasped about the chair in which she was seated, and she clung to it with so much strength that it was necessary to bear her away as she sat. Her complete apathy, her dry and tearless eyes, and her painful breathing, excited the most lively apprehension. In vain was she reminded of her son and of his sufferings. Nothing seemed capable of moving her to tears, "which alone could afford relief," and her situation continued so long that it was feared she must soon follow to the tomb the child so tenderly beloved. At length when every possible means of bringing on a crisis seemed ex-

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hausted, a chamberlain whose name I have forgotten, directed the corpse of the young prince to be placed in the lap of his unhappy mother. The terrible sight restored her to a full sense of her fearful calamity: she uttered a piercing shriek, her arms lost their spasmodic stiffness, and clasping to her breast the dear remains of her child, a flood of bitter tears fell on those cold and faded cheeks, which but a few hours before were glowing with youthful health.

The queen was out of danger from that moment; exhausted, however, by such powerful and rapid emotions, she fainted away, and advantage was taken of this opportunity to remove the remains of her child.

A letter had been despatched to Corvisart as soon as the young prince was taken ill, but the reply of the celebrated physician arrived too late: the remedies he prescribed should have been administered immediately. The croup—a disease before entirely unknown—requires but a few moments to gain the mastery: if these few moments are lost, all hope is at an end. Corvisart was the first who studied the nature of a malady which carries off infants with such fearful rapidity. This claim to the gratitude of every parent would alone suffice to render his memory glorious, without the aid of a hundred other titles to well-earned immortality.

Note by the author from Mem. of Josephine, vol. 2.

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NOTE TO CHAP. XI.

I met, for the first time, at this party, one of the most lovely women of the court of Queen Hortense: she has been so universally regretted, that to name her is to point out the many qualities which adorned her: this was Madame de Broc!.... Though dressed in the plainest style, she appeared to me to eclipse all those who surrounded her, not so much from possessing any extraordinary beauty, or from immediately attracting notice: many women might boast a prettier nose, a lovelier mouth, or a fairer colour; but none could lay claim to finer eyes; they were expressive of wit and gentleness combined; and it was impossible to be noticed by Madame de Broc, without feeling an attachment for her. The kind of carelessness which she displayed in all her movements, gave her a peculiar charm which I never discovered in any one else. The interest she inspired by the tender expression of her countenance, could not fail to grow into friendship, whenever she took the least pains to encourage that sentiment; but she appeared, as it were, anxious to fly from every tender feeling, as if apprehensive of being diverted from the subject of her habitual meditations—the memory of her husband whom she had lost, to the best of my recollection, two years before that period. It would have been very difficult to introduce mirth and cheerfulness in any conversation with her; nevertheless, she was not absolutely plunged in melancholy; she would even make

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an effort to join in social conversation. Her smile, however, always appeared constrained; and so far from its exciting any pleasure, it was almost painful in any one to perceive that they had provoked it; it formed too striking a contrast with a physiognomy which might have served as a model for portraying the figure of melancholy.—*Memoirs of the Empress Josephine*, vol. 2.

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NOTE TO CHAPTER XII.

The Emperor Alexander went to visit Josephine on the 10th of May, and dined at Malmaison. She remained in the saloon, notwithstanding her acute bodily sufferings which she endeavoured to resist. A game at prison-bars was played after dinner on the handsome lawn before the palace; she attempted to take part in it; but her strength failed her, and she was under the necessity of sitting down. Her altered countenance was noticed by every one; to the most anxious enquiries she replied with a smile, that a little rest would restore her strength; every one in fact, retired with the hope that she would find herself better the next morning.

With a view to calm the uneasiness excited by her state of health, she attempted to take her usual walk; but her illness assumed a serious turn, and she was brought back to her apartment in a condition which excited great alarm.

The symptoms did not improve in the course of the day; she had repeated faintings. The night was still worse; she was already attacked with a kind of delirium; her mind was much agitated; she spoke much, contrary to the physician's express recommendation.

On the 24th of May (it was on a Friday) she awoke with a severe pain in her throat. The king of Prussia and the Emperor Alexander were expected to dine that day at Malmaison. Finding that her majesty had a slight attack of fever, M. Horeau insisted upon her remaining in bed, and avoiding the least cold, the more so

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as, having taken a purgative medicine, her exposure to the air might be attended with serious danger. As the empress did not seem disposed to follow his advice, he deemed it proper to appeal to Madame d'Arberg's influence; and this lady endeavoured to obtain a promise from her majesty that she should not rise from her bed. All was in vain; Josephine insisted upon dressing as usual, and descending from her apartment in order to do the honours of her house to the allied sovereigns. She sat down to table, assisted at the court circle; but at last her sufferings increased to such a degree, that she was forced to retire, and requested of Queen Hortense to supply her place.

From that moment her illness assumed a very serious and alarming turn. The next day, 25th of May, the Emperor Alexander paid her a visit, and finding her much altered since the preceding day, he proposed to send her his private physician; she declined the offer, out of consideration for M. Horeau, in whom she reposed the utmost confidence. He had formerly been the emperor's physician, and in quarterly attendance upon him. Ever since the divorce he was attached to the empress, who entertained the highest opinion of his character and medical skill.

He invariably gave his attendance to her in the morning, and as soon as the consultation was over, he took his departure for Paris. As he was lodged in a very small apartment at Boispréau, he never remained there; it was therefore doing him a manifest injustice to accuse him of neglect during that fatal 25th of May. He was anxious to remain at Malmaison; but the empress, being apprehensive lest he should prevent her from rising, as it was her intention to do, pressed him to return as usual to Paris. As her health did not yet excite any appre-

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hension for her life, he gave way and took his departure.

At night, the physician of Rueil was sent for; he was greatly alarmed at the danger in which he found the empress, whose imprudent conduct was attended with such fatal consequences. He thought it would be advisable to apply immediately twenty-five leeches on the back of the neck and between the shoulders. He would not however take upon himself the responsibility of so violent a remedy; a messenger was sent to Paris in search of M. Horeau; some time elapsed before he could be found; he arrived at last, and nothing could exceed his distress of mind when he found her majesty in a condition which left but very faint hopes of her recovery. She was perfectly collected, but spoke with great difficulty. Her looks seemed to question M. Horeau who attempted in vain to disguise his affliction. She pressed his hand to prove to him that she was fully aware of her danger; and she displayed in that dreadful moment all the courage which was to be expected from her well known character.

M. Horeau consulted with M. Lamoureaux, the physician who had been called in; the latter stated it as his opinion that the application of leeches might have saved the empress; but he had not ventured to resort to this remedy without the previous approbation of her majesty's regular physician. "Why, sir, exclaimed the latter, in a case like this you ought not to have waited for me; the loss of two hours is fatal."

A blister was applied between the shoulders, and sinapisms to the feet; but, alas! it was too late! her dreadful malady was making rapid and frightful strides.

This excellent woman, always apprehensive of giving pain to those she loved, abstained from all complaint, took every remedy that was prescribed, and by her gentle

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and affectionate looks endeavoured to calm the fears of those who surrounded her.

She was informed that Redouté, the celebrated painter of flowers, whose talent she admired, was at Malmaison, where he came to paint two beautiful green house plants: she expressed by signs her wish to see him. As soon as he appeared, she held out her hand to him, and then gently forced him back, saying that she was afraid her complaint might be contagious. "Next week," said Josephine, "I trust I shall see you working at some fresh masterpiece."

During the night, from the 27th to the 28th, she fell into a lethargic sleep which lasted five hours. At ten o'clock in the morning M. Bourdois arrived. He agreed with M. Horeau that she was past all hope, and deemed it proper to prepare Queen Hortense and the vice-roy, who, alarmed at the rapid inroads made upon that idolised countenance which they were contemplating with an always increasing apprehension, made her prepare for receiving the sacraments, and sent for the curate of Rueil to administer the rites of the church. He was from home; and she confessed to the preceptor of the young princes of Holland who, though a priest, had long ceased to exercise his clerical functions. She answered with great difficulty, as her tongue was gradually refusing to perform its functions; but her countenance lost none of its calm and benevolent expression.

The Emperor Alexander arrived at Malmaison; Josephine appeared to revive on seeing his majesty, and cast a look of gratitude upon him. Prince Eugene and Queen Hortense knelt near their mother's bed, and received her blessing. They were both unable to address a single word to the emperor; their sobs alone gave utterance to their grief. "At least," said Josephine with

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an expiring voice, "I die regretted; I have always desired the happiness of France, and have done every thing in my power to promote it; I may say, with truth, in the presence of you all who now attend my dying moments, that the first wife of Napoleon has never caused a single tear to flow." These were her last words, and the next day, 29th of May, at half after eleven in the morning, her sufferings were at an end, and those of her family past all remedy or consolation!

Memoirs of Josephine, vol. 2.

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Note of Hortense to the Count de la Garde, (from the collection of Romances annexed to the English edition.)

I owe you a thousand thanks, my dear sir, for the charming *romances* you have sent me. I had already set to music some of them which had fallen accidentally in my way before I knew their author. I am gratified by the pleasure of your acquaintance, and the opportunity of telling you how much I am flattered by your politeness in preparing such a delightful collection. Your two other productions were read with deep interest: they display abilities, which, although a woman, I can justly appreciate, for whatever is deeply felt is always within our comprehension.

With this note you will receive a book of my own *romances*, which I pray you to accept as a remembrance. Let it express the pleasure I have derived from your poems, and my sentiments of sincere esteem and respect.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

Anxious that I should escape the illiberal remarks of my neighbours on my want of knowledge of the world, my mother proposed that we should move to another apartment; I instantly agreed, and we proceeded to that in which the quadrille of the princesses was said to be going on. On reaching a door that was beset with company going in or out, I was on a sudden separated from my mother, and carried to some distance from her, without having it in my power to join her again. I was quite beside myself; and unconscious of what I was doing, I took off my mask, and searched for her in every corner of the apartment which I had found so much difficnlty in reaching; unable to restrain my agitated feelings, I questioned every one I met, and called out: "Where is my mamma! have you seen my mamma?" The gazing multitude laughed at my distress, and as I was a perfect stranger in the place, every one passed me without uttering a word; at last, after a few moments of indescribable anguish, I met M. Gazani, who, with his usual kindness, offered his arm to assist me in finding out a mother who was the object of my anxious enquiries. Never was a more opportune service rendered in a more obliging manner.

We went over various apartments; and whilst I was seeking in every corner for the object of my enquiries, two black dominos came up to me. One of them said, that I no doubt had a coquettish motive for taking off my mask, since it was usual for those who wore that

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unpretending costume, to preserve it the whole evening.—"Coquettishness indeed! would that I were far from here; for I can assure you, that I have not the smallest desire of making a conquest in this place." "Is it possible you do not enjoy the scene, you, mademoiselle, who are so lively and so fond of dancing?" rejoined the little mask, laying hold of my arm. "Not I indeed; have I not told you that I have had a surfeit of it? I am seeking for my mother, and your questions have no other effect than to heighten my distaste for this fatiguing ball. I meet with nothing to-day but annoyance from every one." "Nevertheless I am determined not to part with you so soon. Are you going to-morrow to the concert of Queen Hortense?" "I am indeed, to my sorrow; if that party should be as entertaining and agreeable as this one has been to me, I shall have passed a very pleasant week!"—I uttered the last words with increased peevishness; and forcing myself away from the domino, who seemed to have at heart to torment me, I dragged M. Gazani along to another part of the saloon, where I at last found my mother. M. Gazani, after bestowing a few moments to the recital of my unlucky adventure, told me that he believed I had made an egregious mistake, by the harsh replies I had just given. "How is this?" I hastily asked; "I do not believe I have been guilty of any mistake." "I really suspect, mademoiselle, that the domino you have so roughly treated is the queen of Holland." "That, indeed, would give the finishing stroke to my misadventures." "I am confident that it was the queen's voice and address." I wished to persuade myself that he was wrong; but that ill-disguised tone of voice resounded in my ears, and I was unable to dispel a feeling of uneasiness, which I vainly attempted to combat,

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and which increased my anxiety to withdraw from the place where so many unpleasant circumstances had, with unerring fatality, assailed me.

We were unable to overtake Madame Foy, whose habit of appearing at masked balls, together with her graceful and lively wit, enabled her to take a prominent part in the scene, and to intrigue with any one upon whom she condescended to bestow attention. We therefore took our departure without waiting for her. * * *

We reached the residence of Queen Hortense at a late hour, our humble equipage having found some difficulty in making its way through the elegant carriages which choked up the street. Proud of the livery which was a badge of their dependence, the coachmen, exultingly holding the reins which checked the fiery ardour of a handsome pair of horses, were lavish of their jokes and antechamber wit, the character of which was far too sublime to be understood by the modest driver of wretched hacks, that had become worn out in the service of the public. The repeated lashes aimed at them by the proud carriage drivers were insufficient to extricate us from our embarassment. We were upwards of an hour in reaching the gateway, where it became necessary for us to alight. Fortunately, however, the weather was very fine, and we reached the hall without encountering the accident I so much dreaded, on account of my white shoes. We were indeed stared at by the porter and footman, with a slight emotion of contempt, which brought the colour to my cheeks; but this wound to my self-love was so soon over that I had already recovered from it before we reached the top of the staircase.

The saloons were full of company, and the pianoforte was in the apartment where the queen had station-

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ed herself. That apartment could only be reached by passing through several others, by elbowing men loaded with decorations and embroidered dresses, and ladies glittering in the splendour of their attire. I trod upon some, got entangled with the handsome fringes of others, curtseying all the while to those I had met at Malmaison; I felt that I was behaving awkwardly, and experienced the utmost embarrassment and uneasiness, which greatly increased as I approached the queen; I became at last completely disconcerted. What she told me was assuredly not calculated to restore my self-possession, as the reader will now have an opportunity of judging.

"Good evening, mademoiselle; are you in better temper than yesterday? I must tell you that you do not shine at a masked ball. You will ask how that happened? Well, then, I went up to speak to you, and you replied in a tone of harshness and ill humour, which is certainly foreign from your usual manners." "Madame, I was at a loss to find my mother, and I acknowledge—" "Yes, I know it; nevertheless, that was not a motive for treating me as you did." "I was unconscious that your majesty had condescended—" "Unquestionably you could not guess who I was; it is an excellent lesson for the future, which will, I trust, induce you to be always obliging to every one; I am distressed at yesterday's occurrence; I only came up for the purpose of countenancing you; and it must be owned you cannot be accused of having met me half way. But to the fact. The gentleman who attended me was anxious to become acquainted with you; he knows my mother's partiality for you, and wished to discover how far her taste was correct. He could only do so by ascertaining your mental qualities, by forming

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some notion of your manners, and, in short, by not being satisfied with beholding a pretty face. You did not, however, set off those qualities to advantage. You may judge of my mortification at the tone you assumed; for this domino, whose curiosity was so much excited, was no other than .... the emperor."

I was overpowered at these words; for I must own I could not disguise from myself that I had never been so disagreeable as on the occasion of the ball of the preceding night; nevertheless, at no other time could I have been more ambitious of shining, in order to justify the attentions that were shown to me. To have failed in proving myself worthy of the protection of the empress, appeared to me a mark of ingratitude as heinous, on my part, as if it had been intentional. The emperor must have felt surprised that so much kindness should be bestowed upon a person who could only appear in his sight an ill-mannered girl.

When the queen found that my countenance began to assume a character of the most painful emotion, she addressed a few kind words to me, with her accustomed gracefulness of manner, and assured me that she had said to the emperor whatever was calculated to soften down the unfavourable impression occasioned by my ill-timed roughness of behaviour. He had greatly enjoyed an openness of manner to which he was no longer accustomed, and of which all trace was obliterated, except in the camp, where his soldiers retained it in their intercourse with him; he was far from finding fault with it. * * * * *

When our visits to the empress ceased, we had neglected paying our respects to Queen Hortense; for we were attracted to Malmaison, not so much by the charms of power and greatness, as by the happiness of

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seeing a mother and daughter both elevated to the highest rank without having lost any of those graces which rendered them so engaging in a more humble sphere, while both possessed, even in an eminent degree, the virtues most essential in individuals destined to rule over others,—viz. charity and generosity! Confident, therefore in the queen's goodness, we determined to pay her a visit. The following circumstance afforded us an opportunity for so doing.

A young man named Drouet, a native of Holland, had at this time just come to Paris. He played on the flute with superior skill, but experienced a thousand obstacles in making himself known, and though in straitened circumstances, he was said to be the only support of his father and sister. He was introduced to us. We felt interested for him, and determined to use our endeavours to obtain for him the patronage of her majesty, always accessible when appealed to in behalf of the unfortunate. M. Drouet was well worthy of her notice, for with a talent of the highest order, he could barely procure a livelihood for himself and family.

We solicited an audience of the queen, which was instantly granted. After offering some apologies for having so long neglected to pay our respects to her, we mentioned M. Drouet, and we soon contrived to excite her interest in his behalf. She assured us he should be introduced to her; that she would hear him play, and do something to improve his circumstances. In the meanwhile, she signified her wish that he would announce a concert for which she would take eighty tickets. She performed all she promised, and to her M. Drouet is indebted for the rapid reputation he acquired in Paris and afterwards in every city in Europe. The handsome fortune which he now possesses he owes

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entirely to the queen's favour; M. Drouet may have forgotten this, like many others to whom she extended her assistance. I always feel happy in recording traits of goodness in any one connected with Josephine, and I congratulate myself on calling such matters to the remembrance of those who happen to forget them.

I afterwards learned M. Drouet was far from being so meritorious as we imagined: he indeed lived with his father and sister; but the one acted the part of his servant, while the other was his cook. An acquaintance of mine calling once upon him, surprised him at dinner with his sister waiting upon him at the back of his chair, and his old father brushing his boots in the antechamber. On hearing this I was sorry at what we had done for him; but after all, it is better to be the dupe of a good heart than to suffer suspicion to check every generous impulse. I can never regret the credulity which, though it may often have subjected me to odious imposition, has more often proved to me a source of gratification.—*Memoirs of the Empress Josephine*, vol. 2.

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PORTRAIT OF HORTENSE.

Hortense de Beauharnais was at this time seventeen years old; she was fresh as a rose, and though her fair complexion was not relieved by much colour, she had enough to produce that freshness and bloom which was her chief beauty; a profusion of light hair played in silky locks round her soft and penetrating blue eyes. The delicate roundness of her figure, slender as a palm tree, was set off by the elegant carriage of her head; her feet were small and pretty, her hands very white, with pink, well rounded nails. But what formed the chief attraction of Hortense was the grace and suavity of her manners, which united the creole *nonchalance* with the vivacity of France. She was gay, gentle, and amiable; she had wit, which, without the smallest ill temper, had just malice enough to be amusing. A polished and well conducted education had improved her natural talents; she drew excellently, sang harmoniously, and performed admirably in comedy. In 1800 she was a charming young girl; she afterward became one of the most amiable princesses of Europe. I have seen many, both in their own courts and in Paris, but I never knew one who had any pretensions to equal talents. She was beloved by every one, though, of all who surrounded her, her mother seemed to be the least conscious of her attractions; I do not mean to say that she did not love her, but certainly she did not express that degree of maternal affection which Hortense de Beauharnais merited. Her brother loved her tenderly; the first consul looked upon her as his child; and it

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was only in that country so fertile in the inventions of scandal that so foolish an accusation could have been imagined, as that any feeling less pure than paternal affection actuated his conduct towards her. The vile calumny met with the contempt it merited, and is now only remembered to be confuted.

Memoirs of the Dutchess D'Abrantes, p. 318.

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Madame Campan relates an anecdote of the dutchess at a private theatrical representation at the school:— The Dutchess of St. Leu played Esther, the part of Elise was supported by the interesting and unfortunate Madame de Broc. They were united by the same uniformity of age and inclinations, the same mutual friendship, as are attributed to the characters in Racine's drama. Napoleon, who was then consul, his generals, ministers, and other principal persons in the state, attended the representation. The prince of Orange was also observed there, whom the hope of seeing Holland once more, and of re-establishing the rights of his house, had, at this period, brought to France. The tragedy of Esther was performed by the pupils, with the choruses in music. Every one knows, that in the chorus at the end of the third act, the young Israelites rejoice in the hope of one day returning to their native land—a young female says, "I shall see once more those dear fields,"—another adds, "I shall weep over the sepulchre of my forefathers;" at these words loud sobs were heard; every eye was turned towards a particular part of the room; the representation was interrupted for a moment. Napoleon, leaning towards Madame Campan, asked the cause of this agitation. "The prince of Orange is here," said she: "he

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perceived something in the verses which have just been sung, applicable to his wishes and situation, and could not restrain his tears." The consul had already different views: "What is said about returning home does not apply to him, however," said he.

THE END.

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